

# Shifting parties, constant cleavage

*Party system formation along the urban-rural  
cleavage in post-communist Lithuania*

Master thesis  
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# Abstract

When studying the party system formation in post-communist Lithuania, the Western European theoretical framework is a useful, although not sufficient tool to understand this process. Weak alignments between voters and parties and unstable party systems have made it difficult to apply the Western European theoretical framework because it prerequisites a high degree of party institutionalisation. In addition to unstable electoral support for the established parties, new parties successfully emerge, but disappear, then change name, splinter and merge with other parties.

This thesis introduces the Reversed cleavage model, which is an attempt to study cleavages in a post-communist setting, exemplified with the urban-rural cleavage in Lithuania. Instead of focusing upon continuous representation of political parties, the Reversed cleavage model applies cleavage continuity as a point of departure. The unstable party system in Lithuania is thereby not related to voters' missing perception of cleavages, but to the parties' inability to establish long-lasting alignments with the electorate. Party system formation along the urban-rural cleavage in post-communist Lithuania, is explained by shifting parties and constant cleavage.

**Keywords:** Party system formation, Lithuania, urban-rural cleavage, Reversed cleavage model



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# Abbreviations

## **Lithuanian parties**

DP	Labour Federation
DP	Labour Party
KDS	Christian Democratic Union
LCS	Lithuanian Centre Union
LDDP	Lithuanian Democratic Labour Party
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
LDP	Lithuanian Democratic Party
LiCS	Liberal and Centre Union
LKDP	Lithuanian Christian Democratic Party
LKP	Lithuanian Communist Party
LLRA	Lithuanian Pole's Electoral Alliance
LLS	Lithuanian Liberal Union
Lpkts	Union of Political Prisoners and Deportees
LSDP	Lithuanian Social Democratic Party
LSDP-NS	Coalition of A. Brazauskas and A. Paulauskas "Working for Lithuania"
LSLDP	Lithuanian Socialist People's Democratic Party
LTS-NP	Lithuanian National Union – Independence Party
LUS	Lithuanian Farmers' Union
LVP	Lithuanian Peasant Party
ND-MP	New Democracy Women's Party
NS-S	New Union-Social Liberals
Sajudis	National Opposition Movement
SDK	Social Democratic Coalition
TPP	National Progressive Party
TS	Homeland Union
VNDS	Peasants' and New Democracy Union

## **Other abbreviations**

CEE	Central and Eastern Europe
EKR	Estonian Christian People's Party
EU	European Union
PR	Proportional Representation
SFP	Swedish People's Party in Finland
SMD	Single Member District



# Introduction

Can a stable cleavage structure persist alongside an unstable party system? By studying the urban-rural cleavage in post-communist Lithuania, this thesis will argue that cleavages can structure the voters' party preferences without this leading to stable party systems.

Lithuania held its fifth post-communist election to parliament in October 2004 and the outcome confirmed the trend from earlier elections; the party system is unstable, characterised by volatile support for the established parties and an immediate electoral success for party newcomers. This makes it difficult to identify patterns of party-voter alignments because these are not reflected in continuity on party level.

The study of party systems is related to the degree of openness (unpredictability) or closeness (predictability) of the party competition (Millard 2004: 130). The structure of the party competition is further concerned with thresholds for entering the party scene, how parties are related to each other and how the parties are linked to the electorate. Three approaches have been predominant in the study of party systems, none of them mutually excluding the others. The first approach has focused upon socio-structures as sources of cleavage alignments between voters and parties. The second approach has emphasised institutional factors and the last approach highlights the role of actors (Millard 2004: 4). It is important to underline that there is no definitive divide between these three approaches, although one can argue that they each have a main focus; cleavages, institutional factors or actors.

This theoretical framework origin from studies of party systems in Western Europe and is a useful, although not sufficient, tool to understand political development also outside the core Western hemisphere, such as post-communist Lithuania. By focusing upon Lipset and Rokkan's cleavage model, present its content, inner mechanisms and elaborate upon relevant critique and alternative explanations, such as institutional factors and agency, the aim is to build a model that fit the conditions for party system formation in Lithuania. The most important precondition in the *Reversed cleavage model* is that societal conflicts survive the political parties and therefore represent continuity.

## ***The Reversed cleavage model***

Lipset and Rokkan's cleavage model was designed to explain the stable party systems in Western Europe. Parties simply persisted because of the stable alignments between parties and voters through socio-structured cleavages. These alignments were further strengthened by parties' ability to generate and define new conflicts into their party substance. Party stability thereby became Lipset and Rokkan's keyword when explaining the party systems in Western Europe.

In post-communist Lithuania, and Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) in general, the party system has been more unstable. Highly volatile support for established parties and immediate electoral success for new parties make it difficult to apply Lipset and Rokkan's theoretical framework, simply because their model was designed to explain *stable party systems*. The study of cleavages in a post-communist setting with shifting parties has either lead to the conclusion of cleavages being absent, or that the cleavage structure is fluid. The Reversed cleavage model introduces a new perspective in understanding post-communist party-voter alignments, exemplified with the study of an urban-rural cleavage in Lithuania. By reversing the theoretical preconditions of Lipset and Rokkan, the Reversed cleavage model confronts scholars arguing that the cleavage structure over time will generate stable party systems in CEE (Bakke 2002: 20, Kitschelt 1992). The argument raised in this thesis is that unstable party systems are not the result of voters' weak perception of cleavages, but rather of parties' inability to represent these cleavages by establishing long-lasting alignments with the electorate.

The volatile voter behaviour is thereby a reflection of the fluid party configurations, and not the consequence of cleavages' inability to structure voters' party preferences. Parties can still be regarded as representatives of the cleavage, but the duration and strength of the party-voter alignment is limited and weak. New parties can emerge as new cleavage representatives under very favourable conditions. This thesis will study the urban-rural cleavage in Lithuania and argue that despite shifting parties, the cleavage structure can be seen as stable.

## **Urban-rural cleavage in Lithuania**

The urban-rural cleavage can be assumed to be present in Lithuania because of the many farmers and a huge rural population in the country. This cleavage should at least theoretically have the capacity to structure party competition (Duvold and Jurkynas 2004: 149, Tavits

2005: 288). But scholars have not found evidence supporting this assumption. Lithuania has been considered by many scholars, such as Berglund, Ekman and Aarebrot (2004), Duvold and Jurkynas (2004) Bakke (2002) and Holm-Hansen (2002), to have a relatively stable party system structured along the left-right cleavage, not an urban-rural cleavage. The electorate's fluctuation between the different parties, and the recent success of new parties, weakens the arguments of an emerging stable party system in Lithuania.

### ***Structure of the thesis***

Chapter 1, 2 and 3 constitute the theoretical discussion of party system formation in this thesis. This theoretical discussion touches upon three main approaches to party system formation; cleavages, institutional factors and agency. Chapter 1 elaborates first of all Lipset and Rokkan's cleavage model, presents relevant critique and discusses alternative explanations to party system formation, such as institutional factors and agency. Chapter 2 examines the conditions for studying party system formation in a post-communist setting. Building upon the discussion in Chapter 1 and 2, Chapter 3 presents the theoretical framework of the Reversed cleavage model. This model aims to explain the party system formation along the urban-rural cleavage in Lithuania by assuming shifting parties and constant cleavages. Chapter 4 elaborates the conditions for an urban-rural cleavage in Lithuania and introduces the post-communist party system developments. Chapter 5 accounts for the analysis' methodological considerations, while Chapter 6 presents and discusses the findings.



# Chapter 1

## Cleavages, Institutional factors and Agency

The study of party system formation has mainly been concerned with three explanations; cleavages, institutional factors and agency (Millard 2004: 4, Ware 1996: 185). These three approaches are by no means decisive, but they indicate the variables receiving most attention from the scholars. This chapter examines these three approaches to party system formation, with special attention on the cleavage model of Lipset and Rokkan. Lipset and Rokkan aimed to explain the origin and processes leading to stable party systems in Western Europe by pointing to how parties emerged and why they survived. Their model has been criticized by many scholars, both regarding the theoretical framework, and their model's validity and generality. Lastly this chapter looks into alternative explanations for party system formation and party survival. Here, institutional factors and the role of agency provide different explanations to this process.

### ***1.1 The Lipset and Rokkan cleavage model***

Lipset and Rokkan's aim were to "... account for the emergence of single parties (and) to analyze the processes of alliance formation that led to the development of stable party systems of political organizations in country after country" (Lipset and Rokkan 1967: 35). Central questions of their study were why party systems emerged, why they differed and what mechanisms explained their survival. It was a study of variations in macrostructures explained by the origin, variations, stability and the continuous equilibrium in different multi party systems in Western Europe (Larsen 2003: 39, Berntzen and Selle 1988: 245).

By unveiling the historical roots of the party structure in Western Europe, Lipset and Rokkan connected the origin of each party to alliance formation under so-called "critical junctures" in the state-and nation- building phase (Lipset and Rokkan 1967: 36-38). These critical junctures were societal conflicts evolving around the centre-periphery and the culture-economy axis, and created the conditions for social division. This social division further constituted the foundation for the establishment of political parties. The patterns of interests and societal

conflicts were represented by parties over time, and the party system, according to Lipset and Rokkan, was derived from historical conditions of national and socioeconomic development (Dalton 1988: 128). Parties established stable alliances to the electorate through *cleavages*.

Party alternatives were mobilised along cleavages aligning certain voter groups to certain parties. Lipset and Rokkan's main point was that these party-voter alignments lasted (frozen), and *party stability* thereby became their keyword. "(T)he party systems of the 1960s reflect, with few significant exceptions, the cleavage structures of the 1920's" (Lipset and Rokkan 1967: 50). "Once cleavages were translated (...) into party systems during critical junctures (...) they were frozen (...) for a very long term" (Colomer and Puglisi 2005: 503). New parties could not emerge because party-voter alignments were stable; the voter simply supported the same party in several elections (Zielinski 2002: 193). All political alternatives were fully mobilised and the balance between the parties that had been established in the 1920s persisted. Parties' ability to freeze alignments with subgroups of the electorate through cleavages, resulted in stable environment for political competition since all political alternatives were mobilised and aligned to the voters. No new party families emerged between 1920s and the 1960s (Ware 1996: 225), and the result was stable party systems.

Although concentrating upon patterns of social structures as determinants, it is important to underline the presence of a dynamic element within the Lipset and Rokkan theoretical framework. This can be an argument against accusations about "determinism" within their model (Colomer and Puglisi 2005: 503, Luther and Müller-Rommel 2002: 4, Berntzen and Selle 1988). Lipset and Rokkan (1967) did predict that the stability of voter preferences and support to political parties would change in the future, resulting in more fluctuations than before. Their main point was that party-voter alignments were built up as a response to major social and economical developments. In this process agency and institutionalisation mattered. There was an interaction between political development and socioeconomic structures (Dalton, Flanagan, Beck 1984: 455), and this political development had to be conducted by someone. Lipset and Rokkan saw parties as principal agents of transforming societal conflicts into political divisions because "...cleavages do not translate themselves into party oppositions as a matter of course" (Lipset and Rokkan 1967: 26). When the critical junctures appeared elites made strategic choices within the scope of the existing institutional framework, but the social structures limited or accelerated the conflict potential. Certain



structures created a wider range of possibilities for agency, which further explains the variations of structures (Larsen 2003: 48, Berntzen and Selle 1988: 247).

Lipset and Rokkan's cleavage model can therefore be said to have accounted for both actors and institutions in combination with social structures to explain the party formation process. However, the alignments between voters and parties occurred within a context where they gave most attention to the structural aspect.

### **1.1.1 The cleavage concept**

The cleavage concept is central in the theoretical framework of Lipset and Rokkan's cleavage model. Although the concept is widely used in the literature of political science it is hardly well-defined by any scholars. Even Lipset and Rokkan never really defined the cleavage concept themselves and used confusing synonyms like "conflicts", "interests" and "oppositions" (Aardal 1994: 219). Still, the title of their famous piece "*Party Systems and Voter Alignments*" (Lipset and Rokkan 1967) explains at least the core idea of their notion of what a cleavage can be: a connection between voter preferences and party alternatives. These voter preferences may be shaped within more or less cohesive groups of voters based upon a common identity on territorial location, language, religion, economical position etc. A cleavage is therefore something in-between the voter and the party and constitutes the raw material of political competition, which parties seek to exploit (Berntzen and Selle 1988: 250, Zielinski 2002: 189). Voters aligned to certain parties through cleavages, reflecting the social division. Thereby, the social division constituted the point of Lipset and Rokkan's departure towards structuration of political competition.

According to Lipset and Rokkan five central cleavages, structured along the centre-periphery and economy-culture axis, had shaped the political landscape of Western Europe. Stable alignments between parties and electorate resulted in stable party systems in the region. The development of cleavages had a dynamic that was interlinked with the outcome of prior cleavages. Who won/who lost, which alliances existed before/after affected the conditions surrounding the origin and outcome of the next cleavage (Ware 1996: 186). This adding up of societal conflicts could either reinforce or cross-cut the existing cleavage pattern (Lipset and Rokkan 1967: 10). For instance, the economic cleavage between labour and capital had a tendency to cut across the territorial cleavage, between centre and periphery. This created social bases for new alliances and party constellations, dividing old constellations. The five

cleavages Lipset and Rokkan suggested are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Lipset and Rokkan's cleavages

Critical juncture	Cleavage	Conflict issue	Parties
Reformation	Centre Periphery	Supranational vs. National religion	Nationalistic parties "Minority" parties
French Revolution	State Church	Secular vs. Religious mass education	Liberal parties Conservative parties
Industrial Revolution	Labour	Employees rights vs.	Social democratic parties
	Capital	Employers profit gains	Liberal/Conservative parties
	Rural Urban	Toll and protection vs. Free trade	Agrarian parties Soc.dem/Liberal/Cons.
Russian Revolution	Communism	International revolution vs.	Communist parties
	Socialism	National oriented	Soc.dem parties

Source: Flora 1992: 123

The cleavage concept deals not just with the voter's alternatives and interests in one particular political issue. The cleavage in itself can evolve around one central political issue, such as labour vs. capital, but the concept exceeds this main political question and refers to a wide range of other issues as well. For instance, conflicting attitudes towards private vs. public school founding might be traced back to the cleavage emanating from labour vs. capital. This cleavage channels corresponding attitudes towards other issues as well, like school founding. The electorate identifying themselves as the "labour branch" would probably be more supportive towards public school founding because it would correspond with the attitudes reflecting their belonging in the labour vs. capital cleavage.

The notion of political packages covers this approach, which more or less prerequisites that there exist a primary extensive cleavage that defines other issues into the underlying logic of this cleavage. *The cleavage concept therefore refers to a set of attitudes in different political issues which are combined and explained by the voter's preferences given by structures.* Other conflicts, which may be essential in the political landscape and of personal value of the voter, overlap with the core logic of the main cleavage. We can simply say that a cleavage incorporates values and aspects related to other conflicts and issues as well, and integrate them into the "bounded rationality" of the cleavage.

### ***Developing the cleavage concept***

Other scholars have developed the understanding of what a cleavage is, especially to better illustrate the mechanisms between voter preferences and party formation. Bartolini and Mair (1990) built a more dynamic theoretical approach to study the linkage between voter, conflict and party. They claimed that the cleavage concept consisted of three levels; empirical, normative and organisational. The socio-structural conflict pattern constituted the empirical

level. Values, identity, interests and attitudes were central components within the normative level, while collective action resulting in institutions, like political parties, represented the organisational level. Their definition of a cleavage had to fulfil all three levels, simply stating that structures had to generate attitudes resulting in organisation of a political party (Skare 1998: 177). One central point of Bartolini and Mair's model was the continuous interaction between the different levels. Parties must respond to demands from the bottom. The party expressed and represented the cleavage but without being fully independent from its empirical level.

Whitefield's (2002) study of cleavages in post-communist Central and Eastern Europe combined Lipset-Rokkan and Bartolini-Mair. His cleavage definition emphasised the interaction between divisions found in the electorate with divisions among political actors: "Political cleavages are conceived of here as strongly structured and persistent lines of salient social and ideological division among politically important actors" (Whitefield 2002: 181). Although this definition can be contested and criticised for being too wide and unclear, Whitefield highlighted the corresponding division between structures and actors as a helpful tool to understand how the cleavage concept can be viewed. The interests and preferences found on the socio-structural level correspond with ideological division among political actors. The problem however is that the definition does not say anything about the causal mechanisms between those two levels since it focuses overwhelmingly upon correlating division among political actors.

### *Loyalty and size*

Loyalty was more important than the actual party's size for indicating a cleavage's presence in the Lipset and Rokkan perspective. For instance, the size of the minority population may decrease or increase as a percentage of the total population over time in a given country, but the party loyalty among the minority group was decisive when measuring the presence of an ethnically defined cleavage within the party system. It was not the actual number of voters the party was able to receive from the total electorate, but the number of voters within its potential electorate.

The Swedish minority in Finland might decrease from ten to five percent of the total Finnish electorate, but the presence of an ethnic cleavage between Swedes and Finns depends on how large share of the Swedes who actually support the Swedish People's Party in Finland (SFP),

the ethnical Swedish based party. One might argue that because, hypothetically, SFP reduces its support from one election to the next, this cleavage is becoming less relevant for the structuration of Finnish party politics. But although parties defined to represent the ethnic cleavage attract a smaller share of the Finnish electorate, the decisive element, according to the Lipset and Rokkan, was the loyalty percentage within the minority group<sup>1</sup>. Parties' ability to maintain continuous support from a potential subgroup of the electorate was important for its survival and for the cleavage presence.

Lipset and Rokkan, Bartolini and Mair, and Whitefield applied, in one way or another, the organisational expression of the cleavage, namely political parties, to indicate a cleavage's presence. This might constitute a problem when studying cleavages in settings where party systems are regarded as unstable. Parties as cleavage indicators illustrate a central problem regarding the theoretical preconditions when measuring cleavage presence. This topic will be further discussed in Chapter 2.

### **1.1.2 Parties' ability to survive**

Parties played an important role in Lipset and Rokkan's cleavage model since they constituted the continuous element of their theoretical framework. Although parties could be traced back to certain cleavages, representing social division emanating from critical junctures, the parties themselves were actors within the party system. They represented, presented and operated according to a wide range of political issues and constellations of alternatives. Parties' function extended the role of just being cleavage representatives. If parties were totally dependent of the cleavage, they would disappear when the cleavage conflict was solved or defined within the party system. But they did not; parties survived political and institutional hurdles because they had a historical baggage since they emerged before and during the mobilisation of the mass electorate in Western Europe (Dalton et al. 1984: 459).

#### ***Shifting cleavages, constant parties***

Parties do not simply present themselves *de novo* to the citizen at each election: they each have a history and so have the constellations of alternatives they present to the electorate (Lipset and Rokkan 1967: 2).

Parties were older than the electorate and represented the constant element of Lipset and Rokkan's theoretical framework by being the continuous, institutional expression of the

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<sup>1</sup> Another example would be parties representing farmers and the interests of the agricultural sector.

cleavage. They explained this continuity by arguing that parties in Western Europe had a unique ability to survive their original conflicts by creating its own bounded rationality. Parties defined arising conflicts and issues into this rationality provided by their cleavage belonging (Marks and Wilson 2000). By absorbing new conflicts within the rationality of the party's cleavage origin of the past, parties were able to survive as organisations and thereby generating expectations about the future (Lipset and Rokkan 1967: 3).

The continuity was found on party level because political parties seldom committed suicide; instead they generated and defined new societal conflicts (cleavages) when the old, original conflict was solved or defined within the party system. New cleavages were absorbed into the already existing party substance. The party systems can therefore, once they are established, "act as independent systems of channelment propelled by their own laws of inertia" (Larsen 2003: 49, with reference to Sartori 1969: 90). This does not mean that the parties were totally independent of the cleavage itself, but the inner organisational strength of Western European political parties, the strong links to certain sectors within the society and the parties' ability to generate new conflict patterns, were distinctive features to explain the survival of single parties and the stability of party systems observable in this region (Ware 1996: 188, 213).

Decades of structural change and economical growth have made old, established alternatives increasingly irrelevant, but the high level of organizational mobilization of most sectors of the community has left very little leeway for a decisive breakthrough of new party alternatives (Lipset and Rokkan 1967: 54).

The abovementioned reference to Lipset and Rokkan shows how the inner organisational strength of established parties enabled them to interpret new issues within the framework of existing cleavages. This made it difficult for new party alternatives to emerge, thereby preserving the existing political parties. According to Lipset and Rokkan, one can argue that the Western European party system, because of the parties' ability to survive by redefining and generating new conflicts into their party substance, was characterised by shifting cleavages, constant parties.

For instance, the conservative parties have survived as a party family by generating and redefining new societal issues and conflicts into its party substance. These parties originated from opposing the liberal ideas of the French revolution. The conservative parties were

founded to support the King and the nobility and especially concerning the economic field they were against liberalisation of trade (Layton-Henry 1982: 7). Today one might argue that the same conservative parties are the main advocates of free market economical policy, directly opposing the policy of its founding fathers. The parties have redefined the political agenda of its political substance adjusting themselves to the new societal and economical conditions. Since the parties in Western Europe are able of surviving its original conflicts and generating new, the structures are observable on party level generating stable party systems, as Lipset and Rokkan pointed out.

### *Alternative theories on party survival*

While Lipset and Rokkan pointed to the parties' ability to generate and extend the cleavage potential as an important feature to explain party survival, other scholars have presented alternative explanatory models. The catch-all party, electoral-professional party and cartel party introduced other perspectives to understand how parties survived<sup>2</sup>.

Instead of cultivating the conflict potential of the cleavage by defining and generating new issues, as Lipset and Rokkan saw as central for party survival in their model, Kirchheimer (1966) pointed to party elite's ability to tone down political conflicts as an instrument to reach a broader part of the electorate, and thereby survive. By reducing the conflict potential of the cleavage, parties transformed from ideological member-based organisations to electoral based catch-all parties. Hoping for benefits or fearing losses on election day, parties themselves opted to accommodate to its competitor's successful style, if not catching all the strategy at least intended to catch the maximum number of voters (Kirchheimer 1966: 192). Although Kirchheimer certainly saw this process of party change as elite driven, he also accounted for the structures operating within the party system by arguing that "...tradition and the pattern of social and professional stratification (that) may set limits and offer potential audiences to the party's appeal" (ibid: 186). The cleavage was important since it structured the competition between political parties, but the argument raised by Kirchheimer was that party survival was the result of party elites moving closer to each other along this axis.

Panebianco (1988: 269) argued that Kirchheimer's approach only implicitly treated the increasing professionalism of party organisations. The parties developed into more electoral oriented organisations (Katz and Mair 1994: 2). This meant that the earlier member-based

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<sup>2</sup> These models were more focused upon the continuation and party survival, not emergence as such.

mass parties now was characterised by “electoral-professionalism”, involving a weakened position of the party in every arena. Parties’ ideological identity, collateral activity and party bureaucrats had been replaced by single issues, weakened vertical ties and personalised leadership (ibid: 264).

The parties’ access to state resources and their position to conduct institutional engineering were regarded as important instruments for party survival in Katz and Mair’s (1995) notion of a “cartel party”. The access to state power gave certain parties favourable conditions to secure their own survival through financial support, positions and public commissions. The competition between parties was replaced with elite cooperation, establishing party cartels protecting each other.

## **1.2 Critique of Lipset and Rokkan**

The Lipset and Rokkan model has by no mean been immune to critique. The critique will here be treated under two subgroups; the first relates to the theoretical framework, prerequisites and assumptions in their model. Although Lipset and Rokkan were said to account for the role of actors within their framework, Berntzen and Selle (1988) argued that the theoretical framework of their cleavage model was deterministic, limiting to the role of agency. The second subgroup can be approached as a post Lipset-Rokkan critique, dealing with the validity and generality of their model and how it should be applied. This critique relates to the cleavages’ ability to structure party competition, a topic that was actualised with the increasing party system instability in Western Europe towards the end of the 1970s.

### **1.2.1 Actors and structures**

Berntzen and Selle (1988: 246) argued that Lipset and Rokkan had an undefined, conflicting relationship to the role of actors in their model. This was a result of their structural-functional retrospective design where Lipset and Rokkan failed to combine the micro-macro level they claimed their sociological approach represented. Lipset and Rokkan were accused of deciding the outcome, overemphasising the structural element and neglecting agency-centered explanations and institutional factors (Ware 1996: 189). The main problem was the premise for the analysis. Lipset and Rokkan’s aim was to search for historical variables to explain the political outcome, not to identify the different alternatives available at the given time in history. Thereby they were accused of neglecting the intentions and interests of the actors involved in the process of party formation when the development took place.



Berntzen and Selle argued that the actors in Lipset and Rokkan's model were just externally "added" to play the part that structural conditions a priori expected them to play. It was the function of the actors and not their intention that justified their presence in the model. The actors filled out the dynamic element within in their model, but their choices and actions were limited by the socio-structural developments given by the model. This meant that the actors' qualitatively, substantial and ideological content lost its meaning because the actors' function was more important than their intention. The function of the Counterculture movements in being opponents to the Centre became more important than the content of the counter-policy they actually represented (Berntzen and Selle 1988: 259). The model thereby lacked an obvious separation between why an act was possible and why it actually was carried out. It thereby became difficult to circle out the independent variable since the outcome already was decided by the structural-functional retrospective design.

### **1.2.2 Post Lipset-Rokkan critique**

The Lipset and Rokkan theoretical framework had the intention of explaining party system formation and stability through party-voter cleavage alignment. In addition they suggested that that these alignments were frozen in Western Europe Lipset and Rokkan (1967: 3, 54). The model therefore predicted stability, not changes. The generality of this statement has generated a lot of debate that essentially boils down to a methodological question; is the frozen alignment statement an empirical observation made at two separate points in time (1920s and 1960s) or is it a general hypothesis about cause and effect over time? (Larsen 2003: 46, Mair 1997: 4). An extreme interpretation of this statement would involve an absent of change (Dalton: 1988: 131). This would give each party the same percentage support in every election simply because the alignment is frozen.

Towards the end of the 1970s the Western European party system was regarded as more unstable. Emergence of new parties and decline of old established ones with increasing electoral volatility, were put forward as evidences of a more fluid political environment<sup>3</sup>. The frozen alignment assumption was not sufficient to explain the party fractionalisation and increasing electoral volatility in Western Europe towards since it predicted stability, not changes (Kitschelt 1992: 10). The party system changes were not structured along the cleavages Lipset and Rokkan suggested. Scholars questioned the cleavages' ability to

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<sup>3</sup> It is worth mention that the literature on party decline is highly contested. The traditional Lipset and Rokkan parties are still important in the Western European party system (Ware 1996: 378).



structure the party competition (Dalton, Flanagan and Beck 1984: 11). This resulted in what we can call Post Lipset-Rokkan critique which further can be divided into two approaches. The first represented scholars supporting the theoretical framework of the Lipset and Rokkan model, but suggested a realignment of the party system in the sense that the changes reflected the structuring capacity of new or other cleavages than the ones Lipset and Rokkan operated with. The second approach questioned the cleavages' capacity to structure party competition at all, a dealignment. These two contradicting approaches related differently to the very notion of cleavages. The first acknowledged the Lipset and Rokkan theoretical framework, but argued that other or new cleavages structured the party competition. The latter was more sceptical to the notion of cleavages as such, and focused upon other independent explanatory variables.

### ***Realignment – new cleavages***

The literature on cleavage realignment represented first of all a respond to the frozen alignment assumption of Lipset and Rokkan, and an update of their model as such. The party systems changes in Western Europe during the 1970s and 1980s, with emerging parties and the old ones experiencing decreasing electoral support, reflected, according to the realignmentists, new patterns of party-voter alignments. The party system changes did not mean that the notion of cleavages as such was an invalid assumption. The realignment approach recognised that social structures through cleavages had the ability to structure the party competition, but the party system changes reflected alignments along other cleavages than the ones Lipset and Rokkan had suggested.

The importance of Lipset and Rokkan's traditional cleavages was by Dalton et al. (1984: 13) proved to be declining in Western Europe. Class and religion had decreased importance for voting behaviour, and their structuring capacity upon party competition had been replaced by other issues. The electorate's support for new political parties also suggests that there were changes regarding the kinds of cleavages dividing the electorate (Dalton 1988: 173-174). The party system changes were viewed as a realignment around new cleavages such as a resurrection of the centre-periphery axis, post-materialism, immigrant scepticism and the EU-issue (Heywood, Jones and Rhodes 2002: 119). Further, the interconnection between the established parties and their collateral organisations, such as labour unions and interest groups, representing an essential linkage in aligning parties to voters through cleavage

structures, was also changing in its nature<sup>4</sup> (Luther and Müller-Rommel 2002). New social bases and new political issues brought about new alliances of partisan alignment.

The emergence of Green parties showed that the party system no longer could be considered as frozen, obviously there was room for mobilising another political alternative than the established ones. Alber (1989: 197) observed that societal trends created the potentials for new cleavages represented by the Green parties. The “educational revolution” and the state penetration were seen as critical junctures that created structural changes restructuring the foundations of cleavages. New parties could emerge due to a structurally blocked mobility. Alber’s study of Green parties fitted the theoretical framework of Lipset and Rokkan. The survival of the new parties representing the new cleavages was decided by the organisational consolidation of the party. “...the parties may remain politically relevant even if constellations that made for they rise no longer prevails since parties become independent agents of mobilisation” (Alber 1989: 210).

### ***Dealignment – no cleavages***

The erosion of the Western European party system was regarded by the “dealignmentists” as a prove of the reduced structuring capacity of cleavages in general. Lipset and Rokkan might have been right when “*Party Systems and Voter behaviour*” came out in 1967, but the nature of party politics had changed since then. Their theoretical framework did not fit the new context, especially regarding the linkage between parties and voters. A decreasing share of the electorate voted along old patterns of party ties, and the social group identity could no longer predict the support for one particular party. The long-lasting alignments between parties and voters through cleavages did not unveil the predicted pattern. In addition to the less anchored partisanship, political parties faced a challenge from other more floating forms of collective behaviour. This showed that the volatility was more than just a temporary erosion in partisan loyalties (Dalton et al. 1984: 188). This lead to the conclusion of “...cleavages in general (having) less structural capacity to influence voter choice than hitherto” (Heywood et al. 2002: 123).

Simon Hug (2001) stated that new parties, such as the Green parties, were an expression of new demands and neglected issues, but without referring to the cleavage alignment as such.

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<sup>4</sup> This point can be seen as an extension of Kirchheimer’s catch-all parties and Panebianco’s electoral professionalism.

The emergence was explained by pointing to the strategic interactions between established parties and potential newcomers. A new party "...can be a social movement, a citizen initiative, a political entrepreneur, or even a group of members of an existing political party" (Hug 2001: 40). It was the interactions between established parties and actors of the potential new party that explained their emergence.

Voters did not necessarily align with a certain party the very same day they were born, but rather in the moment they entered the polling station. The assumed duration of party-voter alignments, found in cleavages, did not predict electoral outcomes. The reduced or absent structuring capacity of cleavages in general (old and new) drew the attention towards other independent explanatory variables, such as institutional factors and agency, to better understand the process of party system formation, change and stability (Evans and Whitefield 1993: 527).

### **1.2.3 Other considerations**

The assumptions of cleavages' structuring capacity upon party competition, whether there were new ones, realignment, or whether they were absent, dealignment, were also affected by behavioural changes of the different components within the framework of Lipset and Rokkan's cleavage model. Their model do not necessary function the same way today as it did fifty years ago simply because the components behave and act differently than what Lipset and Rokkan assumed in the 1960s. This does not mean that the cleavage model itself has to be abolished, but the theoretical framework has to be reconsidered or adjusted to fit into new contexts.

#### ***External actors***

The Lipset and Rokkan approach highlighted the role of structures and elite alliances in the state and nation building process to explain the emergence of cleavages and parties in Western Europe. The different actors and their policy goals appeared within the borders of an autonomous state. There were of course external actors as well, such as the Catholic Church, the Socialist International and the Russian revolution, but they played a marginal role in the Lipset and Rokkan cleavage model.

Party system formation in recent democratised regions has to account more actively for the role of external actors. For instance, post-communist Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) has been influenced by external actors promoting democracy and party formation which has

impacted party organisation quite obviously, at least more than Lipset and Rokkan accounted for in their model. NATO, USA, EU and party organisations from established democracies in Western Europe, operate as external actors affecting political outcome in CEE (Berglund, Ekman and Aarebrot 2004: 41). For instance, party organisations in the EU supply their party twins in CEE with material and financial resources they never would have had access to. This trans-national party cooperation can definitely affect the success and failure of some political parties in new democracies.

### ***Non-member strategies***

The mass mobilisation of the electorate through partisan membership and collateral organisations constituted an important instrument for the party elites of getting access to and aligning with the electorate in Lipset and Rokkan's model. The importance of the electorate is of course central to any party operating within a democratic system, irrespective of time and space. But there are different sources and methods for parties of gaining access to, and being successful on, the political arena today. Parties certainly depend on facing and aligning with the electorate on election day as a source of democratic legitimacy, but it can be argued that parties' incentives of establishing long-lasting alignments with the electorate today are not the same as Lipset and Rokkan assumed in their model.

Instead of mobilising the electorate through membership campaigns, organisations and civil society participation, parties use other channels to reach and influence the voters' party choice. Especially the role of media and its focus upon personalities, leader qualities and simple message have changed the nature from *mobilising* to *campaigning* for election. Party elites have to sell themselves, their message and their party as reliable and responsible to the electorate. Other actors of organised collective behaviour and other methods of reaching the electorate make parties less voter-oriented because electoral success can be obtained through other channels.

### ***Spatial validity***

How region specific is the Lipset and Rokkan cleavage model? The state and nation building process and the origin of cleavages from critical junctures are limited to the Western European region. But the understanding of party system formation as alignments between parties and voters through socio-structural cleavages is more important for whether the analytical tool can be applied outside the core of Western Europe.

Lipset and Rokkan never suggested that their model could apply for other regions; their model had the intention of being regional specific (Berntzen and Selle 1988: 249). This thesis aims to challenge the spatial validity of the Lipset and Rokkan model by studying party system formation along the urban-rural cleavage in post-communist Lithuania. Some of Lipset and Rokkan's theoretical prerequisites obviously have to be changed or be replaced in such an attempt. The interesting element however, is whether the understanding of the party systems as voter-party alignments through cleavages is a valid approach also outside Lipset and Rokkan's geographical area.

### **1.3 Alternative explanations**

The sociological approach of Lipset and Rokkan, emphasising social structures, is mainly contested by two alternative explanations; institutional factors and the role of agency. Together, all these three approaches have isolated advantages and disadvantages when explaining formation, change and development of political parties and party systems. This thesis examines two alternatives to the Lipset and Rokkan cleavage model, suggesting that parties operate according 1) institutional factors, and 2) agency.

Before we go into to the literature providing alternatives to Lipset and Rokkan's cleavage model, it is important to highlight the distinction between *party formation* and *party change*. Party formation deals with the origin of political parties, their emergence. Party change can be described as the process of transformation of existing parties as an explicit point of reference, or as the degree of "...responsiveness of parties and party systems to factors that created them" (Ware 1996: 8).

Contemporary literature is quite extensive on elaboration of models of party system change, such as the already mentioned scholars Kirchheimer, Panebianco and Katz and Mair (page 12), but when it comes to theories and models dealing with party system formation, scholars have failed to develop a framework that can be applied outside Western Europe (Biezen 2005: 149). Lipset and Rokkan's cleavage model still constitutes an important contribution for understanding the mechanisms behind party formation, although its theoretical framework and validity in time and space are contested.

### **1.3.1 Institutional factors**

Institutional factors did not make much of a difference when dealing with the political outcome or the formation of party systems in the Lipset and Rokkan perspective (Ware 1996: 189). Stating that “the crucial differences among the party systems emerged in the early phases of competitive politics before the final phase of mass mobilisation”, Lipset and Rokkan (1967: 35) assumed that all political alternatives were mobilised when the institutional changes were made. Institutions were therefore seen more as dependent variables resulting from the interplay of social forces. For instance differences in the electoral systems did not by itself explain the difference between each party system regarding the survival of, differences in the number or origin of the parties represented in the party system.

But other scholars have pointed to the importance of institutional factors and how these can affect the size of parties and the conflict dimensions along which parties seek to exploit (Ware 1996: 199). Therefore institutional factors have to be taken into account when studying the development of political parties. The set of rules and norms simply regulate interaction between individuals and structure social relations since the institutional framework is the arena of political competition. Institutional factors “...matters and affects the capability of political parties to reach their electoral, office and policy goals” (Luther and Müller-Rommel 2002: 269). The outcome of political competition is related to the rules of the game or more specific, how parties compete. The nature of the party competition, as a result of institutional factors, also shapes individual preferences.

#### ***Party formation***

Panebianco (1988) related the formation of parties and their ability to survive to institutionalisation itself. All parties must, according to Panebianco, institutionalise to a certain extent in order to survive as organisations (Panebianco 1988: 54). The internal power relations were essential to understand parties in his perspective. The degree of institutionalisation, meaning parties’ ability to exist independently of their origin, was related to the circumstances forming the parties. Panebianco named this the Genetic model (ibid: 50) which suggested three different sources of party formation; 1) through territorial diffusion, penetration, or both, 2) whether the party leadership were externally or internally legitimated, and 3), degree of charismatic leadership in the party formation process.

Through the process of institutionalisation the party developed its own logic and goals. Institutional goals could not be attributed by its members' rational goals. The point was that the sources of party formation also affected the degree of successful party institutionalisation. Party formation through high degree of territorial penetration, internally legitimated and non-charismatic leadership tended to lead to strong party institutionalisation (Ware 1996: 99).

### ***Electoral systems***

The inner variation of different electoral systems has mechanisms that generate and affect the outcome of election and thereby the party system. The Duverger's law is maybe the most referred example of this (Kuhnle 2003: 68), where it states that "simple-majority single-ballot system favours the emergence of two-party systems<sup>5</sup>" (Ware 1996: 191). Scholars disagree whether the Duverger's law should be viewed as a causal mechanism regarding the origin of party systems, meaning that SMD *leads* to two-party systems, or whether it deals with the *sustainability* of two-party systems when elections are arranged according to SMD principles. Kuhnle (2003: 68) interpreted Duverger to clearly reject the assumption of a multi-causal approach. The outcome was, according to Kuhnle, that Duverger was mainly concerned with the electoral system's independent effects upon the party structure through influencing the number of parties, size, alliances and representatives. The SMD electoral system had an inner logic that generated the emergence of two competing parties. Da Silva (2006) was more supportive of a milder interpretation of the Duverger law, accounting for a wider range of variables as well. The point was that institutional mechanisms such as electoral affected political outcomes (Kuhnle 2003: 68, with references to Duverger 1969: 205).

Ware (1996: 193) argued that thresholds can form political competition and further individual party preferences. In order to stabilise and restrict party competition, voters and elites are forced to concentrate on parties that are large enough to win seats (Bakke and Sitter 2005: 251). The higher this threshold is, the more difficult it is for smaller parties to gain representation. A larger percentage share of the seats in parliament goes to the largest parties. Party competition is thereby decided by parties managing to get represented after facing the electorate, here the rules of the games, such as the thresholds, may influence the outcome. Some parties have to adapt their strategy according to their possibilities to cross the threshold when fronting the electorate.

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<sup>5</sup> Scholars have opted for a distinction between Duverger's Law (Single-member-district leads to two-party systems) and Duverger's hypothesis (elections with proportional representation leads to a multiparty system) (Kuhnle 2003: 70).



### ***Institutional factors and rational actors***

When stating that the institutional factors, such as the electoral system, affect party system formation, one of its preconditions is a rational choice understanding of the actors involved in the party competition. According to Moser (1999: 361) institutionalisation “means that political actors have clear and stable expectations about other actors”. Regarding the electoral system, one thereby has to know the inner logic and the possible outcome that it generates to fully understand and operate according to it. Both voters and candidates have to be rational and able to make strategic choices based upon stable expectations about the electoral system and its predicted outcomes.

The question is not whether institutions matter, because they do, but *when* they matter. Incentives to make new rules for “more” democracy after universal suffrage became the norm in Western Europe, for example going from SMD to PR elections, did not result in the emergence of new political alternatives despite this institutional change. In some cases it shifted the electoral balance, but in most cases changes in the electoral system strengthened the existing party systems (Kuhnle 2003: 77). The role of strongly institutionalised political parties accounts for the ability to use and manipulate institutional arrangements to reach own party goals. The party can thereby be viewed as an *intermediate* variable defining the strength of the institutional framework (Kuhnle 2003: 76).

### **1.3.2 Agency**

The agency approach state that parties and party elites act within, and form the party system. Parties themselves are central actors in the formation of party systems and initiate changes within the party organisation as a strategy to win elections (Randall 2003: 350). It is not the structures or the institutional factors that decide the outcome of political competition, but the party elite’s ability to make the right choices to achieve electoral success. One can argue that Lipset and Rokkan had a naive understanding of party elites and their motivation for establishing political parties. In their perspective, party elites served as representatives of the public without self-interests. Contrary, scholars supporting agency related approaches suggest that party elites have both the self-interests and the ability to influence the party system.

### ***Party formation***

Duverger (Ware 1996: 94) argued that party formation occurred along a horizontal and a vertical dimension where agency played a central role. The horizontal dimension distinguished between direct and indirect parties. Direct parties could be seen as unitary



organisations built up around direct party structures, while indirect parties emerged as a unification of confederations or other bodies. A party could therefore be more or less direct in its formation. For instance the emergence of the British Labour Party consisted of more indirect structures, such as trade unions, cooperative societies and so, than the French Socialist Party, which was established more on direct party structures. The vertical dimension was the units of the different parties, their “original crew” so to speak. Duverger identified four types of original crews forming the parties in Western Europe. The caucus party; established by political elites within the legislative body, the branch party; member-based party organisations, the cell party; concerned with the quality not number of their recruits, and the militia party; extensive party organisation with many tasks outside conventional electoral politics (ibid 1996: 95-96). The point was that within all these four types of parties, agency played an important role in explaining the formation and the structure of the party.

### *Agency and cleavages*

Schattschneider (1975) combined agency with cleavages and concluded with a more active part to be played by the party elites in the formation of cleavages. He acknowledged that cleavages may constitute the raw material of political competition, but he questioned the independency of structures. In his view, party leaders could simply seek to exploit cleavages to provide access to government. This view challenged the theoretical framework of Lipset and Rokkan’s approach since Schattschneider more or less stated that cleavages were top-down creations made to raise the party elite’s possibilities to get in office (Ware 1996: 197).

Schattschneider’s argument was that the role of party leaders and the choices they made as entrepreneurs influenced the formation of party systems just as much as societal structures did (Ware 1996: 198). If there were numerous conflicts within the society, the party leaders had to find the most important one. This gave party leaders a straight route to office and power. Following this argument one might state that party leaders of the “New Politics Parties” defined new conflict dimensions, such as environmental protection vs. economical growth and party bureaucrats vs. “common people”, and thereby entered the party system. The development of cleavages was a prime instrument for party leaders to enter the political arena or even take over the government (Schattschneider 1975: 73)<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> Schattschneider’s approach can be viewed as the opposite of Kirchheimer’s catch-all perspective where party leaders avoid or undermine the conflict potential of the cleavages within the society (Ware 1996: 231).

The structural conditions may be present, but the actual cleavage formation has to be defined and conducted by someone. This is where the role of agency is combined with the structural characteristics, just as Schattschneider argue. Still, if one assumes that agency is present in all party systems, why do party systems themselves differ? Party formation takes place under different circumstances and the role of agency can vary within this perspective. Ware (1996: 200) argued that party elites' ability to conduct entrepreneurship was related to three different ways the voter connected with a party. 1) The material/individual link; voters linked to the party through social hierarchy based upon material risk and benefits, example patronage. 2) The social solidarity link; voters express identity or solidarity with certain groups within society, example class voting. 3) The policy/personalistic/image link; party preference is motivated by what the party offers in terms of policies, image or personality of the leadership. All three constituted analytically distinct forms of voter-party relations.

The party elites' ability to manage entrepreneurship in changing dominant cleavages and social alliances had the most favourable conditions in the third point less in the second. Scholars, such as Heywood et al. (2000), Dalton et al (1984), Luther and Müller (2002), have argued that it is exactly the second point, the social solidarity link that is declining in Western Europe resulting in a thawing of the cleavage alignments. Voters do not cast ballots along socio-structured cleavages, which lead to more favourable conditions for an actor-centred approach to the party formation process (Evans and Whitefield 1993: 527).

## Chapter 2

# The effects of communism

Chapter 1 discussed Lipset and Rokkan's cleavage model and presented alternatives to explain party system formation. The literature on party system formation in Western Europe can be viewed according to three variables; cleavages, institutional factors and agency. Chapter 2 elaborates the conditions for cleavages, institutional factors and agency in the party system formation process in a post-communist setting.

### ***2.1 Party formation in a post-communist context***

Scholars disagree whether the development of party systems in post-communist Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) is going towards more stability or if the party system still should be regarded as fluid. There are of course internal differences, one should therefore be careful to make broad generalisations. Especially Hungary and Czech Rep. are often highlighted as examples of emerging stable party systems in the region. Here, both the number of parties volatility level is lower than the rest of CEE (Bakke 2002: 237, Bakke and Sitter 2005: 243, Sitter 2002: 152, Bugajski 2002: 348, 221). The overall tendency, however, is that both deputies and voters in CEE are less loyal to parties than in Western Europe resulting in unstable party system.

#### **2.1.1 Party defection**

Volatility measures in CEE are way above Western European level, in some countries not at all decreasing over time (Sikk 2005:400). The party system instability is shown by the high level of party defection among elites, deputies move from one party to another or establish new ones, and by the high level of volatility among the voters. In addition to unstable electoral support for the established parties, new parties successfully emerge, but disappear, then change name, splinter and merge with other parties resulting in fluid party configurations (Millard 2004: 114). Although some parties seem to survive, their support, coalition partners and policy is quite unpredictable from election to election.

Party defection among the electorate is usually measured by volatility, but this measure itself does not distinguish between the "...dynamics among incumbent parties and the rise of new ones" (Sikk 2005: 391). This is of course essential in a region like CEE where both shifting

support for established parties and the emergence of new ones have contributed to unstable party systems<sup>7</sup>. Sikk (2005:400) concluded with no apparent decrease in volatility level over time, but a “...modest overall decrease in the popularity of new parties”. Considered recent party developments in some of these countries after 2000, there are reasons to doubt his conclusion about the decreasing support for new parties.

## **2.2 The communist heritage**

The effect of the communist regimes upon party system formation in CEE is a contested issue among scholars. Communism as a way of organising the society affected the region at every thinkable level, from individual to state. One can not refer to any comparable historical analogies that have been through a similar development as the region of CEE, first during, then after the fall of communism. Without doubt, one can say that *history matters* when studying CEE, the question is of course what history and how it matters (Millard 2004: 4).

Chapter 1 elaborated three approaches to party system formation in Western Europe; cleavages, institutional factors and agency. Have the years under communism affected the theoretical preconditions for applying this framework to explain party system formation in a post-communist setting? Scholars studying this topic have arrived at a number of different variables, circumstances and answers. Evans and Whitefield (1993) structured the literature on how the communist regimes in CEE have affected the conditions for party system formation into three approaches. This separation was by no mean decisive, but it pointed to the scholars' main attach of importance when assessing the topic and the implications of translating a western-based theoretical framework into the post-communist context. According to Evans and Whitefield studies on communism's impact upon party system formation in CEE can be divided into 1) the *Modernisation approach*, where the impact of communism upon conditions for party system formation was assumed to be limited, 2) the *Missing middle approach*, postulated the opposite, communism did affect the preconditions for applying the Western European theoretical framework, and 3) the *Comparative approach*, being essentially a mixture of the former two, stating that communism had different impacts in different countries<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Sikk's study (2005) includes ten CEE countries. The time frame is from 1990-2000.

<sup>8</sup> The Comparative approach is not central for the topic of this thesis and will be left out of the further discussion.

### 2.2.1 Modernisation approach

The impact of modernisation on interest aggregation was central in the “Modernisation approach” (Evans and Whitefield 1993: 531). It claimed that the modernisation of the region, in terms of industrialisation, urbanisation and bureaucratisation during communism, created the same occupational and status structures as this process did in Western Europe. The similar institutional framework would generate the same effects and thereby the same results in CEE as in Western Europe, regardless of communist political and economic institutions. This essentially meant that the Western European theoretical framework could be imposed on CEE without theoretical implications. The impact of communism was not seen as an essential obstacle for party formation along Western principles in the region.

#### *Cleavages*

Berglund, Ekman and Aarebrot (2004)<sup>9</sup> can be said to support the Modernisation approach. Their ambition was to “describe the full set of cleavages at various critical junctures in the history of Central and Eastern Europe” (Berglund et al. 2004: 13). They were heavily influenced by Lipset and Rokkan’s cleavage model, stating that *cleavages matter* in structuration of voters’ and parties’ behaviour and in determining the number of parties and nature of partisan conflict (ibid: 8). Their cleavage definition was somewhat related to Bartolini and Mair’s three-level definition. “A cleavage is rooted in a persistent social division, which enables us to identify certain groups in society”, and “cleavages are institutionalised in the form of political parties and other associational groups” (ibid: 10).

The mechanisms leading to party-voter alignments would be the same in CEE as Lipset and Rokkan postulated for Western Europe. Voters in CEE will have some social and ideological characteristics that parties graft, creating a party system and a cleavage structure similar to the ones found in Western Europe. Berglund et al. pointed to history when they argued which cleavages were present in CEE and ended up with three different categories of cleavages (ibid: 602). The first category was the five Lipset and Rokkan cleavages, which Berglund et al. referred to as “Historical cleavages”. Parties and party systems in post-communist CEE reflected the patterns found in the region during the democratic interlude of the Interwar period when the Historical cleavages structured the party competition (Berglund et al. 2004: 35). The return to pre-communist party attachment and party conflicts was based upon Lipset

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<sup>9</sup> The first edition of this book came out in 1998. The 2004 edition is an updated version, adding some countries to their analysis.

and Rokkan's assumption of continuous party representation through long lasting party-voter alignments. The second category referred to so-called "Contemporary cleavages", involving four cleavages emanating from the period after the transition. The last category consisted of the "Transitional cleavage", referring to a cleavage from the actual transition phase. Berglund et al. thereby argued with the presence of ten different cleavages in the region, new and old, based on parties represented in the region's national parliaments after 1989.

When reading the conclusions in the first edition of their book, the 1998 version (Berglund, Hellén and Aarebrot 1998: 373), one can hardly see any structuration of the party system in CEE along the cleavage pattern they suggested. The multidimensional cleavage structure (up to nine cleavages) is more confusing than resolving. The same applies for their updated 2004 edition, now with ten possible cleavages. First of all, if cleavages are institutionalised in the form of political parties, how should we link a cleavage to a party? For instance, Berglund et al (2004: 602) concluded with the presence of a religious-secular cleavage in Estonia based upon the representation of Christian democratic parties, reflecting the name. There were several parties labelling themselves "Christian Democrats" in the Estonian parliament in the early 1990s, but this is definitely not sufficient to conclude with the presence of a religious-secular cleavage. One of these parties, the marginal Estonian Christian People's Party (EKR), was for instance one of very few EU-sceptical parties and a member of the Estonian anti-EU accession movement. This party might represent EU-scientism rather than a religious-secular cleavage. Secondly, the pattern of re-established "historical cleavages" has not been obvious since very few Interwar parties have survived communism, such as for instance the agrarian parties. The parties that emerged in the region after 1989 did not reflect the historical alignments with the electorate, and there are few similarities between today's party structure and the one of the democratic interlude of the Interwar era. In addition, parties come and go in CEE, which make it difficult to talk about continuous party structure through party-voter alignments.

It is of my opinion that the electoral volatility and constant emergence of newcomer parties in CEE, can not be explained by the cleavage concept and the theoretical framework as it was applied by Berglund et al. They failed because they copied the Lipset and Rokkan approach using political parties as cleavage indicators. But how do we know that certain parties represent certain cleavages, and how can we use cleavages to explain the unstable party system with constant emergence of new parties? Since their approach emphasised the

organisational expression to indicate the presence of cleavages, it basically implies that *a new cleavage is added whenever a new party emerge*. Berglund et al.'s conclusion of a multidimensional cleavage structure in CEE can therefore be said to reflect the unstable party system, not explain it.

### ***Institutional factors***

When studying newly democratised regions, such as for instance CEE, the same institutional framework can be argued to produce very different outcomes, at least from the ones known from Western Europe. Kitschelt argued that there might be a time lag for institutional factors, they will have more visible effects *after* than *during* the democratisation: "...political institutions, at least initially, have little impact on the formation of party alternatives and party strategies, although they obviously affect the electoral outcomes" (Kitschelt 1992: 9).

Shugart (1998) found that the institutional framework, such as parliamentary or presidential systems, could inhibit or strengthen the formation of political parties in new democracies. The reason was that the different institutional framework operated with different executive powers. The legislators campaigned on the basis of their parties' reputation if executive authority was constitutionally weak, and *visa versa* (Shugart 1998: 1). The interests of politicians in forming parties to achieve political power could be deduced from the framework they operate within.

Another institutional factor is the electoral system. According to Duverger's law, in a country with majority election in single-member-district (SMD) one should expect an emerging two-party system (see page 21). Moser (1999) examined the electoral systems and their effects upon the number of parties in post-communist CEE. Most electoral systems in CEE are mixed; representatives are elected both through party lists PR systems and single mandate majority election (Moser 1999: 365). Combining the Duverger law and the Duverger hypothesis, Moser suggested that PR-election should lead to the formation of many parties and SMD-election to two-party systems. His findings did not support this assumption<sup>10</sup>. Moser concluded that the varying levels of institutionalised party systems in CEE explained the lack of strategic voting in the region (Moser 1999: 383).

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<sup>10</sup> Kuhnle (2003: 76) supported Moser's findings, the electoral system, at least not in the Duverger way, can not explain the number of political parties in the region.



Parties serve as the primary mechanism to channel and aggregate public opinion while electoral systems are a secondary mechanism influencing the number of viable political parties. If significant political parties do not exist, they cannot aggregate political elites into nationwide political organisations, nor represent large segments of the public opinion (Moser 1999: 364).

A stable party system can therefore be seen as an intermediate variable to explain the effects of the electoral system upon the number of political parties in CEE. The weakly institutionalised party systems constrained institutions of playing a decisive role in forming the party system. The weak parties reduced the ability for both voters and elites to make strategic choices based upon clear and stable expectations about political actors.

### ***Agency***

According to the Modernisation approach the party formation should take place under the same circumstances as the formation of the Western European party system. Kitschelt found it “...plausible to question whether post-communist party systems organize around lasting lines of conflict that are based on rival political programmes and value commitments” (1995: 448). Therefore, the politics of personality and charisma became more important in structuring political attitudes than the ideological content of traditional party competition in CEE (Evans and Whitefield 1993: 539).

Structural conditions may constrain or encourage the actors’ behaviour. As pointed out in Chapter 1 (page 23), party formation took place under different circumstances and the role of agency can vary within this perspective. One such condition is the historical baggage of each party, which limits and defines their action space. Most CEE parties are young without longstanding historical roots to organisations, ideology or voters. Constraining elements can therefore be argued to be less important. The party itself, with its leadership, can affect the party system formation process more independently. The structural conditions might be favourable for an actor-centred approach to the party formation process agency in CEE.

### **2.2.2 Missing middle approach**

The importance of civil society organisation as a source of interest and political allegiance is often described as decisive to coordinate stable interaction between voters and political parties (Whitefield 2002: 183, with references to Sartori 1969 and Przeworski 1985). But, according



to the Missing middle approach<sup>11</sup> forty years of communist monopoly of all kinds of political activity had a “...debilitating effect on civil society, (undercutting) the possibility of a return to pre-war party attachment or party conflicts” (Evans and Whitefield 1993: 534). Civil society interests were therefore more or less absent when political competition became the norm in the region (Lewis 2002: 33).

The political parties that emerged in CEE after 1989 could not grow out of long-lasting mobilised mass interests because “...communism deprived individuals from institutional or societal structured identities from which to derive political interests” (Evans and Whitefield 1993: 522). Due to the communist control with civil society, the atomisation of the society inhibited the formation of stable alignment between voters and parties because intermediate, middle range civil society organisations did not exist when the party competition started. Structuring of group interests and political preferences began after the transition (Johannsen 2003: 296) and post-communist party formation therefore lacked institutional and social structured identities, such as for instance ideology. The result was individual rather than collective actions shown in the volatile voter behaviour. The Missing middle presented a critique of the Modernisation approach mentioned above since it assumed that absence of a common organised social identity, undermined the mobilisation of political interests into stable alliances, not to mention the re-emergence of the Interwar alignments. The result was a highly volatile electorate and unstable party system without corresponding conflict pattern of the one found in Western Europe.

### *Cleavages*

The cleavages were not and could not be mobilised to the same degree in CEE, according to the Missing middle approach. The lack of a common social base for collective identity failed to produce common characteristics necessary to form cleavage alignments, and further stable party systems. Without this stabilising element, party systems became susceptible to personalism and populism (Tavits 2005: 287). When communism broke down voters and parties emerged at the same time, while the cleavages, assuming to align specific voters to specific parties, were introduced later. Rose and Shin (2001) named this process “democratisation backward”; free elections were introduced before establishing basic institutions as the rule of law and civil society to channel interest aggregation (Rose and Shin

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<sup>11</sup> The Missing middle corresponds with what other scholars have called the Tabula Rasa theory (Kitschelt 1992 and Johannsen 2003).

2001: 333). The party-voter alignment through cleavages occurred after the parties established themselves on the political arena. According to Lewis (2000), voters therefore choose from a long list of political parties that came into existence at the same time as democracy was installed.

Voters choose from a selection of parties that have come into existence for a whole range of reasons and subsequently decide to present themselves to the electorate on different grounds. Cleavages that might be significant within the society as a whole may or may not effect voting patterns, which, in turn, do not necessarily themselves determine the range of institutional choice available or thus shape the party system itself (Lewis 2000: 143).

Tavits (2005) found no evidence supporting that presence of cleavages had a stabilising effect upon the party system in CEE. With special attention to the ethnic and the urban-rural cleavage, she concluded that these cleavages only affected electoral stability during economic downturns. The nature of the party system therefore became fluid since the cleavages lacked the ability to structure party competition. The aligning of parties and voters through cleavages had to be conducted in a political environment without any prior sources of institutional and social structured identities.

### ***Institutional factors***

If parties emerge and operate according to the rules of the games, the party system of CEE can be explained by features of the institutional framework. But the design of the electoral system has not had the expected stabilising effects upon the political landscape in this region. The party system formation has not become structured along the expectations of the Duverger Law (Moser 1999: 364, Kuhnle 2003: 76). Regarding thresholds, Millard (2004: 140) argued that they to some extent promote the consolidation of the parties' size, but the number of party contenders was not affected by the threshold. New entrants, due to splits and newly established parties, kept on entering the competition with successful results.

Panebianco (1988) suggested that the circumstances surrounding the formation of parties affected their ability to institutionalise and thereby survive. The Missing middle, saying that communism deprived the region from a common organised social identity undermining the mobilisation of political interests into stable alliances, limits party formation to be initiated by charismatic leadership. Panebianco stated that parties formed by charismatic leaders had unfavourable conditions when institutionalising (Ware 1996: 99).

As mentioned in Chapter 1 (page 22) the role of strongly institutionalised political parties represent an intermediate variable, defining the strength of the institutional framework (Kuhnle 2003: 76, Moser 1999: 361). Political actors need to have clear and stable expectations about other to act according to the rules of the games. The lack of well established parties undermined the ability of voters and parties to behave according to expectations, and further to make strategic choices. Although institutional factors can be said to shape party strategies, one can argue that the game itself is not yet fully understood by the different actors involved (Kitschelt 1992: 9). For instance Bakke and Sitter (2005: 252) suggested that “...institutional change (in Poland) was as much the consequence of party system instability as the cause”. Especially in the early phases of democratic transition, political institutions reflect the division in power between political parties, which in turn reflect the division within the society (Ware 1996: 200, Bakke and Sitter 2005: 250).

### ***Agency***

Scholars claim that elite factors and agency account strongly for the pattern of party system formation in weakly developed civil societies. Here political leaders can shape the issue agenda under different degrees of constraints, these constraints being for instance structural conditions, civil society organisation and parties’ own history (Chhibber and Torcal 1997). Lipset and Rokkan assumed that parties had their own unique history, a historical baggage limiting the parties’ ability to act independently. But as already underlined by the Missing middle, parties seemed to be less constrained by history in CEE. One might suggest a rewrite of the Lipset and Rokkan statement from Chapter 1 (page 10): Parties do simply present themselves *de novo* to the citizen at each election This gives the party elites better opportunities to influence the cleavage formation process, just as Schattschneider argued (Ware 1996: 202). When party systems are weak, the absence of party identification has to be replaced by personal characteristics of the political leadership as the most important criteria for how voters cast they ballot<sup>12</sup>. Voters channel demands by relaying upon political entrepreneurs.

Following the lack of constraining structural conditions and civil society organisations, giving party leaders greater ability to shape the agenda, Biezen (2005: 155) illustrated two different mobilisation strategies for party elites, *partisan* and *electoral* mobilisation. Parties in new

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<sup>12</sup> This point also corresponds with the new forms of political behaviour addressed in Chapter 1 (page 18).

democracies lacked natural constituencies and a defined electorate when democratic norms became the practice. The competition for voters in general, and not partisans, became the most important source of electoral success since partisan mobilisation is both time consuming and resource demanding. Parties therefore preferred electoral mobilisation<sup>13</sup>. Biezen (2005: 168) argued that this organisational style was more forcefully present in CEE than in Western Europe. As a result the parties in CEE tend to have small participatory membership organisations and are weakly linked to civil society organisations.

In CEE the parties are professional electoral vehicles with a direct link to the electorate without indirect linkages, such as local party organisation branches and trade unions. Party branches of local organisations rarely exceed ¼ of the country, and especially local elections are dominated by independent candidates and a low profile of parties (Biezen 2005: 159). The absence of existing voter-party links made it easier for new parties to emerge (Ware 1996: 150). The low territorial and societal penetration of party organisations:

...leaves parties by and large remote from large sectors of society, and, consequently renders partisan linkage more generally of little relevance as a channel to structure the relationship between parties and society (Biezen 2005: 159).

The degree of territorial and societal penetration was relevant for what Lipset and Rokkan saw as central for the parties' ability to align with the electorate to create a stable environment for party competition. One might argue that the role of political entrepreneurs became increasingly important in the party formation process since there in general was a lack of civil society organisation in CEE.

But this does not necessary mean the "...end of structuration of politics by social divisions" (Kriesi 1998: 181). There is an interrelationship between political actors' ability to identify and address common ideological denominator with interest and values found among the electorate (Enyedi 2005). As Enyedi argues, the Lipset and Rokkan conceptualisation and use of the cleavage allows for a more active role of political agents or entrepreneurs in the process of cleavage formation:

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<sup>13</sup> Somewhat similar with Kirchheimer's (1966) catch-all parties, focusing upon electoral mobilisation.

While in Lipset and Rokkan's framework political oppositions are underpinned by well-defined socio-structural characteristics, the actual development of cleavages is shown to be centered on actors and norms (Enyedi 2005: 698).

This view is also found in Lipset and Rokkan's theoretical framework. Parties are given a central explanatory role in generating political conflicts.

...parties *themselves* might establish themselves as significant poles of attraction and produce their own alignments independently of the geographical, the social and the cultural underpinnings of the movements (Lipset and Rokkan 1967: 3).

The Missing middle approach suggested that the theoretical preconditions concerning party formation explained by cleavages, institutional factors and agency had to be modified when applying this framework on CEE. First of all, the weakened civil society organisations hindered party formation along cleavage structure. Secondly, the role of institutional factors as independent variable was reduced, and thirdly, as a result of the others, agency played a vital role in the party system formation in CEE.

### **2.3 Are there post-communist cleavages?**

The literature on party system formation in CEE, divided into the Modernisation approach and the Missing Middle approach, provide two different answers when assessing the question of cleavages in a post-communist setting. This can be explained by their different views regarding the effects of communism upon civil society organisation. This has further consequences for the applicability of the western-based theoretical framework of party system formation. Scholars have presented results partly supporting both views, but we can generate two contradicting statements regarding cleavage presence in CEE:

- 1) Cleavages do not exist in CEE (Missing middle)
- 2) Cleavages exist in CEE (Modernisation)

#### ***No cleavages***

Cleavages constitute the raw material of party competition. The problem however is that this approach rarely fit other cases than Western European party systems (Biezen 2005: 149). The structural capacity of cleavages are doubted when cleavages are not reflected in stable party systems. But if cleavages do not exist in CEE, how is party competition structured then? Structuration of party competition along cleavages has been criticised because the duration

and predictability of these cleavage alignments have been contested, especially when party configurations are fluid. When leaving the cleavages behind, explanations of party system formation emphasise either institutional factors or agency. Although institutional factors arguably affect party system formation, the theoretical framework for these effects prerequisite rational actors. Rational actors mean stable conditions and predictability for political competition (Moser 1999, Andresen 2005<sup>14</sup>). The effects of communism in CEE theoretically imply that institutional factors in general are less important than agency. The preconditions for institutions to independently affect the party formation are not fully present because the actors (parties) themselves are unstable. Agency, on the other hand, can be viewed as more relevant in this matter.

### *Cleavages, but which ones?*

If we assume that voters derive party preferences from cleavages also in post-communist CEE, as the Modernisation approach suggests, the next task is to locate which cleavages are present in the region. First of all, scholars agree on the existence of attitudinal divides among the electorate, but the literature is more inconclusive regarding these divides' structuring capacity in institutionalising the party system (Johannsen 2003: 294). Secondly, the CEE shared a history of communism, but it is unlikely to find a uniform cleavage structure across the entire region<sup>15</sup>. Fertile conditions for one cleavage might be found in one country, but not in another. Different socio-economic structures influence the presence and importance of cleavages, and how they interact with other cleavages (Johannsen 2003: 293).

So far, these cleavages or attitudinal divides have been identified to be of pivotal importance for the structuring of the party system in CEE after 1989:

- As already mentioned, Berglund et al. (1998 and 2004) suggested three subgroups of cleavages; historical (see page 8), contemporary and transitory. They ended up with ten different cleavages in the region, applying a framework very similar to the Lipset and Rokkan.
- Kostelecky (2002) added two cleavages, a generational and a gender-based, to the Lipset and Rokkan cleavages.

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<sup>14</sup> Andresen's article points to the importance of contextual understanding of the mechanisms behind rational choices on money savings in Russia.

<sup>15</sup> This is essentially the point of the Comparative approach in Evans and Whitefield (1993).

- Kitschelt (1992), without referring to cleavages as such, suggested that the party competition was structured along an issue dimension reflecting pro-market liberals vs. pro-state authoritarians.
- Evans and Whitefield (1998) studied left-right self-placement when predicting support for pro market parties.
- Zarycki (Johannsen 2003 with reference to Zarycki 2000) found that left-right economic issues corresponded with an urban-rural cleavage.
- Bakke (2002: 239) suggest four cleavages in addition to the Lipset and Rokkan ones: the view of democracy, judging of the past, pro/anti market economy and foreign policy.

### **2.3.1 Why cleavages are problematic in a post-communist setting**

As seen from the discussion above, scholars do not agree on a uniform cleavage structure in CEE. The constant shift of the party configurations constitutes a problem when identifying cleavage presence in the region. The high level of voter volatility reflects the weak links between parties and socio-structured interests among the electorate and volatility itself therefore becomes an argument against cleavage presence in CEE.

#### ***Identifying cleavages***

The cleavage concept was discussed in Chapter 1, where the organisational expression of the cleavage, namely political parties, was most often used by scholars to indicate its presence. This theoretically leads to three possible assumptions concerning the presence of cleavages in CEE: First of all, many shifting parties would indicate a multi-dimensional cleavage structure in CEE. For instance Berglund et al. (2004: 602) listed up a pattern consisting of ten different cleavages. The second assumption when using parties as cleavage indicators, is that these cleavages are fragmented and fluid since parties appear and disappear rapidly (Moser 1999: 371). Thirdly, the lack of observable stability in party representation could lead us to conclude with the absent of cleavages in this region (Whitefield 2002: 184 with references to Ost 1993, White, Rose and McAllister 1997, Elster, Offe and Preusse 1998).

One could end up arguing that new cleavages arise whenever new parties emerge and win seats in elections. This certainly becomes a challenge when new parties constantly emerge at every new election. Do these new parties then represent new, distinct cleavages? If so, the *permanent* element of a cleavage defined as “...persistent lines of salient social and



ideological division...” (Whitefield 2002: 181), the three-level presence of structure, attitudes and organisations (Bartolini and Mair 1990) and the party-voter alignment approach of Lipset and Rokkan (1967), lack the ability to explain the structuration of party competition in CEE.

All these assumptions are derived on the basis of stable parties indicating the presence of cleavages. This constitutes a problem when parties come and go, new ones enter the scene, and are rarely built upon representation of specific societal interests. The behaviour of parties in CEE makes them simple not suited for indicating cleavages. Voters may still derive their party preferences from cleavages, but the organisational expression (parties) and the stable party-voter alignments do not have favourable condition for long lasting survival in CEE. The conclusion of many, unstable or none existing cleavages basically drawn from unstable party representation, could be seen as a methodological erroneous inference.

### *Time horizon and alignment*

The challenge relates to how one approaches time horizon and alignment when identifying cleavages in a region where party representation is shifting. Organisation of societal division into mobilised political alternatives in post-communist CEE was faced with two challenging factors. First of all, the communist heritage and its weakening of common social identity (Missing middle), and secondly, many events occurred at the same point in time, so-called “phase accumulation” (Rokkan 1970). The time horizon for voters to align to certain parties through cleavages in CEE was dramatically shortened compared to the Lipset and Rokkan framework<sup>16</sup>. Since democracy and party competition occurred at same point in time, the party-voter alignments had to be conducted without having prior civil society organisation to build upon and within a very short time horizon. The short time horizon is related both to the political development through phase accumulation, many processes taking place at the same time, and the limited duration of party-voter alignments.

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<sup>16</sup> Here the alignment happened within a time scope of almost 500 years, from the Reformation till the introduction of universal suffrage in the beginning of the 1920s.



## Chapter 3

# The Reversed cleavage model

Chapter 3 introduces the Reversed cleavage model, which is an attempt to explain the unstable party system formation in post-communist Lithuania. Incorporating elements from the Modernisation approach and the Missing middle, the Reversed cleavage model is built upon the Lipset and Rokkan framework. Since parties represent a changing element in CEE, the Reversed cleavage model assumes that cleavages represent the continuing variable while parties vary. This framework might be favourable to approach the lack of party system formation in Lithuania to understand party-voter relations in a post-communist setting<sup>17</sup>.

### **3.1 Building a model for post-communist Lithuania**

The motivation for using Lipset and Rokkan's framework is to apply a structural approach to the party system formation in Lithuania. The division in voter's party preferences, found in socio-structured cleavages, should thereby correspond with division found among party alternatives. But instead of studying party system stability, as Lipset and Rokkan did, this thesis focuses upon *why stable party systems so far have not emerged* in Lithuania. The empirical preconditions imply that the cleavage model has to undergo some adjustments to fit into the new context. The major problem when applying the Lipset and Rokkan cleavage model on Lithuania is that the organisational expression of the cleavage, namely political parties, represents an unstable variable.

### **3.2 The Reversed cleavage model**

By using Lipset and Rokkan's assumption of party-voter alignments through cleavages, but applying a reversed logic, the focus is drawn towards continuity at conflict level instead of the party level. By incorporating elements from the Modernisation approach and the Missing middle approach, the theoretical framework of the Reversed cleavage model acknowledges both the presence of cleavages and the role of agency in the party system formation. Although parties may come and go, cleavages do not necessary have to do the same. The Reversed

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<sup>17</sup> This framework can further be developed to create an eastern-centric approach to explain the lack of stable party system formation in CEE.

cleavage model builds upon the assumptions of parties being shifting and cleavages being constant.

### **3.2.1 Parties are shifting**

Derived from the Missing middle, the first assumption of the Reversed cleavage model is that parties are weakly aligned with the electorate and weakly institutionalised. Being mainly driven by electoral mobilisation not partisan, meaning that they intend to catch as many voters as possible<sup>18</sup>, the parties never have the intention or capacity of establishing stable, long lasting alignments with subgroups within the electorate (Biezen 2005). This affects their ability to survive. It is the exact opposite postulation of Lipset and Rokkan's expectations about parties' ability to survive in Western Europe. It was the strong party-voter alignments that enabled parties to survive. The organisational strength and the historical baggage made parties capable of owning and interpreting new issues within the framework of existing cleavages. This limited the incentive for the emergence of new parties.

Parties are shifting because they in the post-communist setting are fragile, elite controlled and incapable of implementing efficient policies anchored in the electorates' interests. The top down construction of the parties weakens the elites' commitment to the notion of party politics (Lewis 2000: 73) and party leaders as such, have few ideological liabilities since their party is not built upon representation of specific societal interests. They therefore lack the ability to own political issues and to freeze alignments with the electorate. This makes parties incapable of taking advantages of the institutional factors, such as for instance the electoral system. Their ability to solve societal conflicts, own, redefine and generate new conflicts into their party substance, and thereby survive, is dramatically reduced within this context.

#### ***Parties as agents***

A fluid party structure affects the identification of cleavages because scholars emphasise stable party-voter alignments, thereby stable party systems, when indicating cleavages. When parties are weak, lack history and commitment to ideological liabilities, the preconditions for the Downsian argument about party competition along a spatial dimension is weakened (Downs 1957). If there exist a general commitment to history and ideologies, where parties recognise each other's spatial boundaries, then;

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<sup>18</sup> Somewhat similar to Kirchheimer's catch all parties, see page 12.

...parties cannot move much beyond the centre, nor change their relative positions to left or right, because of the confusing effects this would have on electors and the lack of credibility of a party which repudiated its past commitments, not to mention the policy belief of leaders themselves (Budge 1994: 451).

But according to the assumption of the Reversed cleavage model parties *can* move along and perhaps also leapfrog the different dimensions, just because their past commitments both to politics and electorate are weak. They do not have a historical baggage to develop bounded rationality (page 10). This opens the space for party entrepreneurs in forming the party system. The structural conditions may be present, but the actual cleavage formation has to be conducted by someone. The role of agency is here combined with the structural characteristics. Party entrepreneurs find the raw material for political competition in the cleavages, but weak party-voter alignments affect their ability to survive. These circumstances favour the *emergence* of parties, but weaken their ability to survive.

### ***Party types***

Scholars have tried to classify the parties in CEE into families according to policy, history or ideology but without being really successful (Berglund et al. 1998 and 2004, Bugajski 2002). The fluctuant representation of parties made the classification scheme more or less useless since it needed to be continuously updated. Many of the parties these scholars studied in the early 1990s were simply gone within the next election.

The Reversed cleavage model approaches this problem by structuring parties along the cleavage, not families of an ideology or according to history. The parties are divided into types of parties belonging to either pro or contra the cleavage division. The societal conflicts can thereby be present in the party system by constant party type representation, but the parties themselves can vary. The party type division makes it possible to study the underlying societal conflict pattern over time, without referring to continuous party representation.

### **3.2.2 Cleavages are constant**

Corresponding with the Modernisation approach, the Reversed cleavage model acknowledges the presence of cleavages as a source of party competition. Following the abovementioned assumption of shifting parties weakly aligned with the electorate unable to solve political issues they claim to represent, a second assumption is that cleavages are constant. The assumption of cleavages being continuous can further be derived from two sources; the communist heritage, and the behaviour of parties and voters. The societal changes during

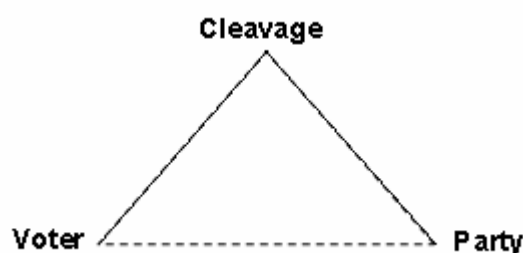
communism could not be translated into political interest aggregation due to the authoritarian regime structure. Organisation of political interests had to be conducted after the fall of communism, along with many other processes. This phase accumulation weakens parties' ability to solve or define societal conflicts (Rokkan 1970). Organisation of interests into political alternatives lags behind the societal changes. The behaviour of parties and voters also affect the cleavages. When voters align with the parties on election day, expectations about political performance of this party is generated. But due to weak institutionalisation, historical commitments and lack of organisational links between voters and parties, the parties are not sufficiently capable of implementing policy to solve the societal conflicts they claim to represent. The expectations of the electorate do not correspond with the actual results parties are capable of presenting. Because of the weak party-voter alignments, the conditions for new parties to emerge are favourable because voters change parties when these do not fulfil their expectations.

The fact that voters change parties frequently does not necessary mean that the foundation for cleavages is absent. If the parties represent the organisational expression of the cleavage, voters may change this organisational expression due to a number of reasons, but still derive their party preference from cleavages. Maybe also the same cleavage from election to election.

...rather than a change in political preferences, volatile behaviour reflects the change in institutional configuration among the contestant, that is, the mergers and splits and the public image of political parties (Johannsen 2003: 295).

Volatile voter behaviour is not necessary the result of cleavages' inability to structure voters' party preferences, but a reflection of the fluid party configurations. If the same group of voters collectively goes from one party to another from one election to the next, one can argue that the cleavage persists and the voters just change the party representing the cleavage. Party entrepreneurs define themselves into the cleavage division without being beforehand aligned, or having the intention of aligning, with the electorate. Figure 1 illustrates the assumed linkage between voter, cleavage and party. Both parties and voters are linked to the cleavage, but the dotted line between voter and party illustrate the weak party-voter alignment.

Figure 1: Voter-cleavage-party linkage in the Reversed cleavage model



### ***Cleavage definition***

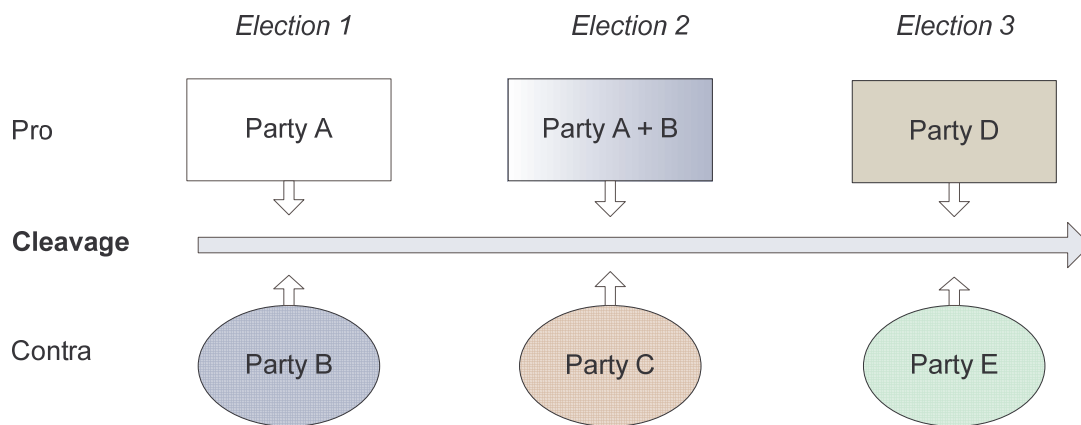
When defining the cleavage concept, the Reversed cleavage model focuses less upon stable party representation: *A cleavage is understood as a structural approach to the link between societal conflicts and political preferences, aligning specific voters to specific political parties. By prerequisite cleavage continuity, the alternation of voters' party preferences does not necessary mean realignment (other cleavages) or dealignment (no cleavages). The cleavage can mobilise the same voters but to different parties over time.*

By unveiling and identifying the societal conflict pattern, a cleavage is by all means related to the understanding of each voter's preferences on micro level. The structures, and further the cleavages, are meant to be at hand with the interests, alternatives and choices the voter relates to. Neither voters nor parties are passive actors in the cleavage formation; both play a vital role in shaping and creating the alignment between party politics and voter preferences. The cleavage can therefore be seen as both constraining and catalysing political activity. Due to the assumption of cleavage continuity the parties either create or define themselves into cleavages without being beforehand aligned with the voter. This makes parties to a larger degree entrepreneurs of, not bearers of, political conflicts. The cleavage can persist detached from its fluctuant organisational expression, resulting in party systems with shifting party representation and constant cleavage presence.

### ***Figure***

In the Lipset and Rokkan cleavage model, parties survived by capturing the cleavage and aligning with the voters. New societal conflicts were defined into the parties' substance. The parties in the Reversed cleavage model are not capable of institutionalising issue ownership and establish stable alignments to the electorate; they just position themselves pro or contra along the cleavage. The Reversed cleavage model is presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Shifting parties, constant cleavage



As illustrated in Figure 2, party B, C and E are the same party type, representing the contra side of the cleavage. The point is that they are not the same party since they differ in name, profile and ideology. In election 1 party A and party B present themselves as pro and contra representatives of the cleavage, but weak party-voter alignments affect the parties' ability to survive as cleavage representatives. In election 2, party B has leapfrogged and merged with party A, opening the space for a new contender, party C, on the contra side of the cleavage. In election 3, all parties representing the cleavage are replaced by new parties, party D and E. The cleavage is preserved by continuous party type representation, but with different parties.

### ***Latent and manifest cleavages***

Both Lipset and Rokkan's cleavage model and the Reversed cleavage model do not exclusively emphasise the institutional factors when examining the formation of party systems and the survival of political parties. This does not mean that the institutional factors can be ignored as an element in this process. To make the model more parsimonious the institutional factors are left out as an independent component within the framework of the Reversed cleavage model. Instead the concepts "latent" and "manifest" cleavages can illustrate the institutionalisation of societal conflicts into organised political alternatives.

A latent political cleavage can be viewed as a sociological term, being theoretically founded arguments of societal conflicts often based upon some kind of social division found in the society. Manifest cleavage, on the other hand, is more a term from political science, describing a conflict being translated into organised political action. The Lipset and Rokkan cleavage model for Western Europe operated with manifest cleavages, in this parties, as the constant element of their theoretical framework. The organisational expression of the

cleavage was manifested in continuous representation of political parties, while the latent societal conflicts were either ignored or randomly defined into the substance of the political parties. Expressed simplistic, the manifest cleavages (parties) were constant, while the latent cleavages (societal conflicts) were shifting.

The assumption of the Reversed cleavage model is that the organisational expression of the cleavage can alter, but the latent conflict potential remains manifested in continuous party type representing. The latent element is the founding potential for the two opposing party types generated by the cleavage. Incentives for foundation of new political parties are always present, but this manifest element is characterised by instability.

### **3.3 *Analytical advantages***

By assuming that parties are shifting and that cleavages are constant, the Reversed cleavage model presents three solutions when approaching the party system formation in a post-communist setting. First of all, it avoids that party system formation related to cleavages becomes too closely depended upon stable representation of particular parties. As shown above, when parties are fluid they do not necessary function optimal to indicate cleavage presence. Secondly, the role of agency and political entrepreneurs is given a broader explanatory position in the party formation process, along with the cleavages. The cleavage is thereby understood more abstract since it is not identified by institutionalised party representation, but by varying parties. According to the Missing middle approach, the role of agency is of pivotal importance in the party formation process in CEE. Cleavages constitute the raw material of party competition, but party leaders seek to exploit cleavages in the party formation process. And thirdly, the problem with short time horizons regarding the alignments between voters and parties are avoided since the continuous, institutional expression of the cleavage, namely the parties, is not seen as a precondition for the presence of cleavages. Alignments between parties and voters occur within a very short time horizon in the Reversed cleavage model.

To sum up: Lipset and Rokkan assumed that cleavages resulted in certain parties, which survived by aligning with electorate and redefining new conflicts into their party substance. The result was stable party systems. The Reversed cleavage model assumes that cleavages are the raw material of party competition, but because of weak party-voter alignments and the parties' inability to own and redefine societal conflicts into their party substance, the cleavage

does not lead to stable party support. Cleavages have the ability to structure party competition, but the electorate reflect the cleavage structure in their preference for different parties from election to election.



## Chapter 4

# The urban-rural cleavage in Lithuania

Can the urban-rural cleavage be found in Lithuania according to the theoretical assumptions in the Reversed cleavage model from Chapter 3? This would involve support for different parties along the same cleavage. Chapter 4 introduces the party system formation and the conditions for the presence of an urban-rural cleavage in Lithuania.

### **4.1 *Party system formation in Lithuania***

The 141 members of the Lithuanian parliament, Seimas, are elected according to a mixed electoral system. 71 representatives are elected in equally sized Single-Member-District (SMD). The remaining 70 representatives are elected in Proportional Representation (PR) on national party lists with the entire country as one constituency and a five percent lower threshold. This electoral system makes it possible for independent candidates and parties with regionally concentrated support to get elected in the SMD-election, while only the larger parties with broad national support will be elected in the PR-election.

#### **4.1.1 Political parties**

The presentation of the Lithuanian party system is structured along a left-right cleavage. There are mainly two reasons for using this cleavage and not for instance an urban-rural cleavage, which is the topic of this thesis. First of all, the political content of the left-right cleavage is relatively clear, both among parties and voters (Ware 1996: 20). Whether the issue is free market economy vs. social welfare or private vs. public schools, the perception of a left-right divide can be traced back to most actors within the political systems. Still, some parties, such as for instance agrarian parties, are more difficult than others to place in the left-right diagram. Secondly, since the left-right cleavage is present in most party systems, also in Lithuania (Berglund et al. 1998 and 2004, Bakke 2002), most parties can be structured along this axis.

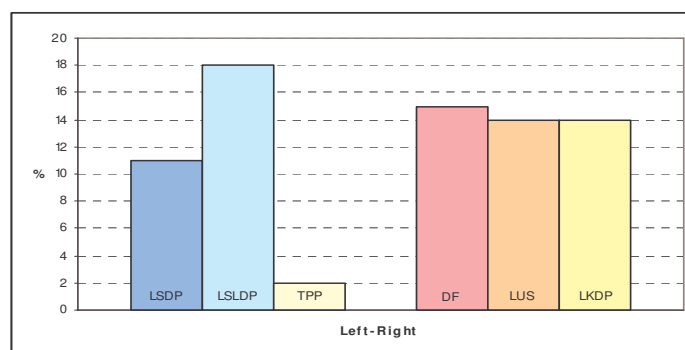
Compared to the rest of post-communist Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), and especially to its Baltic neighbours, Lithuania was said to have a stable party system after the fall of communism (Holm-Hansen 2002: 73). Although the number of relevant parties has increased

with every election, they have all been nicely structured along a left-right cleavage (Jelinskaite 2001: 43). The parties operated in two government coalition blocks. The reformed ex-communist party, Lithuanian Democratic Labour Party (LDDP) was the leading party of the left. The largest party representing the right was the National Opposition Movement Sajudis, later Homeland Union (TS) (Holm-Hansen 2002: 86). In addition, each block consisted of smaller junior partners. The support for the different parties and the government coalitions were highly volatile, and especially the burden of incumbency seem to affect the support for the different parties. The 2000 and 2004 Seimas elections showed that the party system in Lithuania by no means is as stable as assumed earlier.

### *Interwar era*

Lithuania first experienced democracy and party system formation after the First World War when the country got its independent. The peasantry constituted the social basis for party competition in Lithuania during the Interwar era. The party system consisted mainly of two blocks with many smaller parties. As shown in Figure 3 below, the dominating party of the rightist block was the Christian democrats (LKDP), while the Lithuanian Socialist Peoples' Democratic Party (LSLDP), being a merger of Peasant Peoples Party and the Socialist Party, and the Social Democrats (LSDP) constituted the leftist block (Zeruolis 1998: 125). Because of the large rural population, most parties received a majority of their votes in rural constituencies. The Christian democratic block dominated Lithuanian party politics until 1926 when an electoral alliance of the LSLDP and LSDP won the election and formed a left-of-centre government. This government was overthrown by a military coup d'état that same year. Figure 3 presents the results from the 1926-election along a left-right cleavage.

Figure 3: Seimas election 1926



Source: Zeruolis 1998: 126

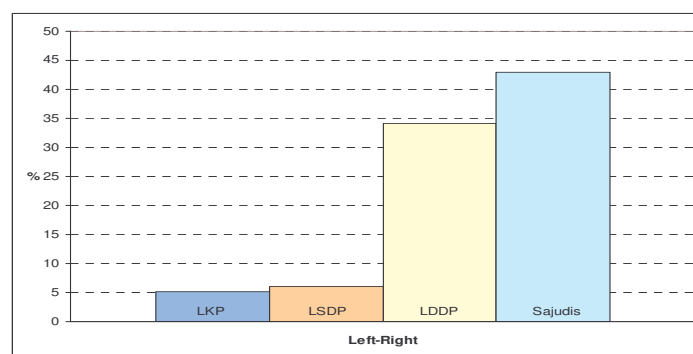
LSDP (Lithuanian Social Democratic Party), LSLDP (Lithuanian Socialist Peoples' Democratic Party), TPP (National Progressive Party), DP (Labour Federation), LUS (Lithuanian Farmers' Union) LKDP (Lithuanian Christian Democratic Party)

The party competition was structured along a religious-secular cleavage and a along property questions in the industrial sector and in agriculture. These two cleavages also had a left-right dimension. The Christian Democrats, with its off-shoot parties, was instrumental in promoting land reforms in the early 1920s. They defended private property rights and advocated compensation for expropriated landlords. More important, the Christian Democrats saw themselves as the sole defender of Catholic values in Lithuania. The parties of the left distinguished themselves from the Christian Democrats by being totally secular and anti-clerical (Zeruolis 1998: 125).

### *The first post-communist elections*

After fifty years under communist rule, Lithuania regained its independency under democratic norms in the early 1990s. Results from the first election to the Lithuanian Seimas in 1990, are presented below in Figure 4. The opposition movement Sajudis became the largest party with more than forty percent of the votes. This faction consisted of many smaller parties, defining themselves as left, right, liberal, polish and Christian democrats, having one thing in common, the wish to end Soviet communism (Zeruolis 1998: 143). A left-right placement of the parties obtaining mandates in 1990 election is presented in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Seimas election 1990



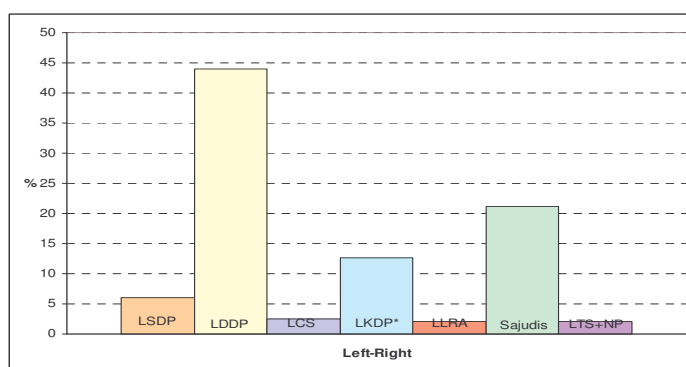
Source: Zeruolis 1998, Jelinskaite 2001, Bugajski 2002, Holm-Hansen 2002, Duvold and Jurkynas 2004

LKP (Lithuanian Communist Party) LSDP (Lithuanian Social Democratic Party) LDDP (Lithuanian Democratic Labour Party) Sajudis (Opposition Movement)

The reformed ex-communists Lithuanian Democratic Labour Party (LDDP) came second, receiving just above thirty percent of the votes. Through a favourable election system the Lithuanian Communist Party (LKP) managed to keep five percent, but disappeared from Lithuanian party politics after the 1990-election. The historic Lithuanian Social Democratic Party (LSDP) from the Interwar era, re-emerged and also got around five percent of the votes. The election resulted in a broad oversized rainbow coalition government.

The 1992-election was a landslide where LDDP won a parliamentary majority with close to 45 percent of the votes. The Sajudis faction disintegrated, which gave way for the establishment of new parties built upon splinter groups originated from Sajudis. All parties from the 1990-election, minus LKP, were successfully re-elected in 1992. In addition to LSDP, LDDP and Sajudis, a new electoral alliance consisting of three parties, Lithuanian Christian Democratic Party (LKDP), Union of Political Prisoners and Deportees (Lpkts) and the Lithuanian Democratic Party (LDP), obtained mandates in the PR-election. Some other smaller parties were able to receive one or two mandates in the SMD-election. The election result is presented along a left-right axis in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Seimas election 1992



Source: Zeruolis 1998, Jelinskaite 2001, Bugajski 2002, Holm-Hansen 2002, Duvold and Jurkynas 2004

LSDP (Lithuanian Social Democratic Party) LDDP (Lithuanian Democratic Labour Party) LCS (Lithuanian Centre Union) LKDP\* (Lithuanian Christian Democratic Party) + Lpkts (Union of Political Prisoners and Deportees) + LDP (Lithuanian Democratic Party) LLRA (Lithuanian Poles' Electoral Alliance) Sajudis, LTS (Lithuanian National Union) + NP (Independence party)

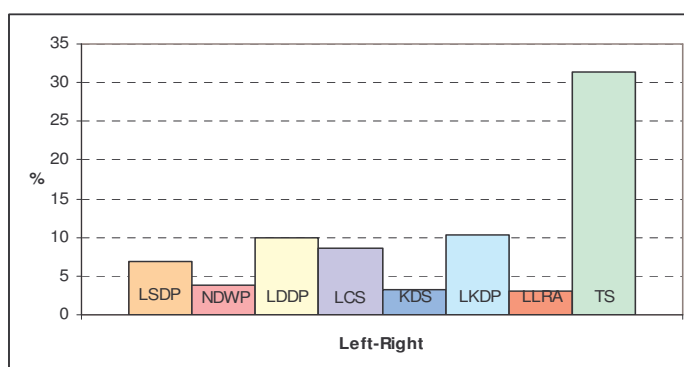
The parliamentary majority of LDDP was not enough to secure a stable government, by mid-1995 the party had effectively lost its majority due to splinter groups within its own faction. LDDP deputies voted against their own government at several occasions, resulting in three different governments during this period (Millard 2004: 137).

### *The 1996 Seimas election*

After four politically turbulent years in office, LDDP suffered major losses in the 1996-election, going from 44 to ten percent. The centre-right parties advanced in this election, where Homeland Union (TS), former Sajudis, won the election with just above thirty percent of the votes. LKDP, now running as an independent party, and Lithuanian Centre Union (LCS) increased their support compared with the 1992-election results. Five parties were able to cross the PR threshold; LSDP, LDDP, LCS, LKDP and TS. In addition, many small parties

obtained mandates in the SMD-election. Figure 6 presents the results from the 1996-election along a left-right axis.

Figure 6: Seimas election 1996



Source: Zeruolis 1998, Jelinskaite 2001, Bugajski 2002, Holm-Hansen 2002, Duvold and Jurkynas 2004

LSDP (Lithuanian Social Democratic Party) ND-WP (New Democracy –Women’s Party) LDDP (Lithuanian Democratic Labour Party) LCS (Lithuanian Centre Union) KDS (Christian Democratic Union) LKDP (Lithuanian Christian Democratic Party) LLRA (Lithuanian Poles’ Electoral Alliance) TS (Homeland Union, former Sajudis fraction)

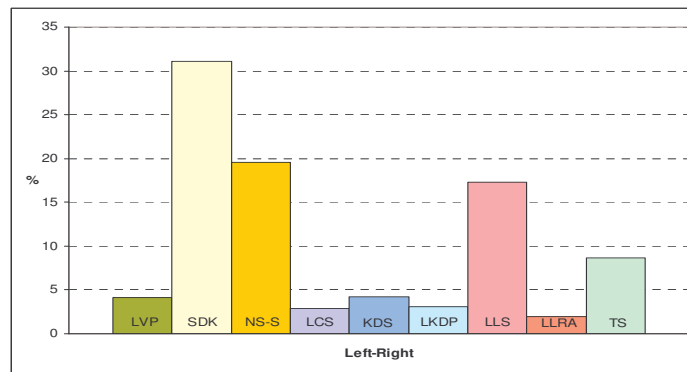
A centre-right coalition government was formed by TS, LKDP and LCS. This coalition had an overwhelming majority in the Lithuanian parliament, but the issue of further economical reforms was controversial also for this government. The government fell in 1999 and a splinter group of TS took office until the 2000 election (Holm-Hansen 2002: 86).

### *The 2000 Seimas election*

The 2000-election marked a polarisation of Lithuanian politics. The disparity between losers and winners of the transition from communism became more and more evident in the Lithuanian society. The polarisation was expressed with a more radical approach and rhetoric during the 2000-election campaign. This opened the room for new political contenders who confronted the political heritage and economical policy of the established politicians (Degutis 2000: 6). In the PR-election LKDP and LCS lost all their seats and only managed to keep two seats each in the SMD-election. TS went from 31 percent in 1996 to eight percent four years later. The leftist block, reorganised into a unified Social Democratic Coalition (SDK)<sup>19</sup>, became the largest party in parliament with 31,1 percent. Two new parties emerged on the party arena, Lithuanian Liberal Union (LLS) and New Union-Social liberals (NS-S). They challenged the short-lived hegemony of the established parties in Lithuania. The election results are presented along a left-right axis in Figure 7.

<sup>19</sup> LDDP, LSDP, Union of Russians in Lithuania (LRS) and the New-Democracy Women’s Party (ND-MP).

Figure 7: Seimas election 2000



Source: Zeruolis 1998, Jelinskaite 2001, Bugajski 2002, Holm-Hansen 2002, Duvold and Jurkynas 2004

LVP (Lithuanian Peasant Party) SDK (Social Democratic Coalition) NS-S (New Union-Social liberals)  
 LCS (Lithuanian Centre Union) KDS (Christian Democratic Union) LKDP (Lithuanian Christian  
 Democratic Party) LLS (Lithuanian Liberal Union) LLRA (Lithuanian Poles' Electoral Alliance) TS  
 (Homeland Union)

Together the newcomers LLS and NS-S received almost forty percent of the votes, and brought about a third centre-block alternative in the Lithuanian party system (Bugajski 2002: 142). LLS was not a new party per se, it competed in the 1996-election as well, but received less than two percent of the votes. Before the 2000-election some prominent TS representatives, among them former prime minister Rolandas Paksas left TS and joined LLS. This, among other reasons, boosted the support for the party (Adomenas 2005: 54). The other newcomer, New Union-Social liberals (NS-S) was a totally new party, established by the celebrity attorney Arturas Paulauskas after his campaign in the 1997 presidential election. NS-S focused their campaign on social security and rural protection programmes by attacking the economical policy of the established parties. The party's success was explained by the populist pragmatic approach to politics (Adomenas 2005: 60) and the "Robin Hood effect" of party leader Paulauskas (Degutis 2000: 10).

Table 2 below indicates the flow of voters from the 1996 to 2000 election. The electoral achievements by the newcomers LLS and NS-S, can be explained by their successful mobilisation of voters that did not participate in the 1996-election, and by the capture of voters from the established parties. LLS stole mainly from TS, and NS-S mainly from LDDP.

Table 2: Voter fluctuations 1996-2000

<i>Voted 2000</i>	<b>Voted 1996</b>						<b>Don't remember</b>
	<b>TS</b>	<b>LDDP</b>	<b>LSDP</b>	<b>LKDP</b>	<b>LCS</b>	<b>Didn't vote</b>	
<i>TS</i>	82,8	0	0	0	6,9	6,9	3,4
<i>NS-S</i>	11,4	19,5	5,4	2,7	3,4	16,1	36,2
<i>LLS</i>	22,9	11,5	7,6	4,6	9,9	18,3	17,6
<i>SDK</i>	8,9	42,6	9,4	3,0	7,4	11,9	16,3

Source: Degutis 2000: 9

Since a majority of the LLS and NS-S representatives never had been employed in political state institution before (Jelinskaite 2001: 109), the 2000-2004 Seimas consisted of many new politicians introducing a “new political style and approach that differed from the old regime-dimension, which changed the nature of party competition” (Duvold and Jurkynas 2004: 141). The new centre-block parties LLS and NS-S established a government coalition after the election, but it fell after nine months due to personal conflicts within the coalition. Then the Social Democratic Coalition formed a majority government together with NS-S, which lasted until the 2004-election.

### ***The 2004 Seimas election***

All party factions in parliament reorganised towards the 2004-election. Most parties running under the Social Democratic Coalition-label in 2000 merged under the new name, Lithuanian Social Democratic Party (LSDP). In the 2004 PR-election, LSDP ran on a common ballot with its government partner New Union NS-S with the name “*Working for Lithuania*” (*LSDP-NS*)<sup>20</sup>. After suffering heavy losses in the 2000-election, the Christian Democrats (LKDP) and the smaller Union of Political Prisoners and Deportees (Lkpts) merged into TS, establishing the united rightwing party *Homeland Union- Conservatives, Political Prisoners and Deportees, Christian Democrats (TS)*. Internal conflicts within Lithuanian Liberal Union (LLS) resulted in a total fragmentation of this party. The remaining members of the different centre-block parties, LLS, Lithuanian Centre Union (LCS) and the smaller Modern Christian Democrats (Mkds), merged into *Liberal and Centre Union (LiCS)* before the 2004-election. Lastly, the New Democracy party (NDP), one of the junior partners in the Social Democratic Coalition from the 2000-election, joined Lithuanian Peasant Party (LVP) and formed the *Peasants’ and New Democracy Union (VNDS)* (Bakke 2002: 85, Duvold and Jurkynas 2004: 141).

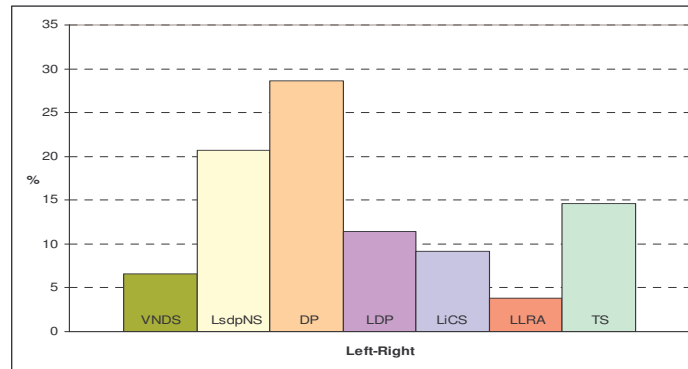
The erosion of the Lithuanian party system is evident in results from the 2004-election, presented in Figure 8. One stabilising factor was that all the four abovementioned party alternatives managed to obtain mandates in the PR-election. However, the support for these party alternatives compared with the last election, was highly volatile. The incumbent coalition of LSDP and NS-S went from a collective support of above fifty percent in the 2000-election, to just above twenty percent four years later. The reorganised TS improved its result compared to the devastating 2000-election, and ended up with around 15 percent. LiCS

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<sup>20</sup> Full name: Coalition of Algridas Brazauskas and Arturas Paulauskas “Working for Lithuania”.

achieved just below ten percent, while VNDS obtained for the first time mandates in PR-election with close to seven percent support nationwide. Again, two new parties successfully emerged. Labour Party (DP) and Liberal Democratic Party (LDP<sup>21</sup>) together received around forty percent of the votes. Figure 8 presents the election results along a left-right axis.

Figure 8: Seimas election 2004



Source: [www.seimas.lt](http://www.seimas.lt), [www.parties-and-elections.de](http://www.parties-and-elections.de), verified by Jurkynas

VNDS (Peasants' and New Democracy Union) LSDP-NS (Working for Lithuania) DP (Labour Party) LDP (Liberal Democratic Party) LiCS (Liberal and Centre Union) LLRA (Lithuanian Poles' Electoral Alliance) TS (Homeland Union)

DP won the election, being the largest party in almost every constituency with around thirty percent of the votes, nationwide. This party was established by Lithuania's richest and most famous businessman, Viktor Uspaskich, a former NS-S representative to the Seimas. The successful campaign of DP focused upon dissatisfaction with established politicians for neglecting the poor Lithuanians. The other newcomer, Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), was a result of the different splinter groups within LLS after the 2000-election. Following the resignation as prime minister in 2001, due to the breakdown of the LLS-NS government, Paksas broke with LLS and formed LDP (Adomenas 2005: 54). The turbulence around Paksas did not end here. After winning the presidential election in 2003, Paksas was later impeached and forced to resign in 2004 accused of corruption. Supporters of Paksas joined LDP before the 2004-election and the party received just above ten percent of the votes.

It was impossible for the established parties to neglect the overwhelming electoral support for DP. A broad majority government coalition was established by DP, LSDP, NS-S and VNDS<sup>22</sup>.

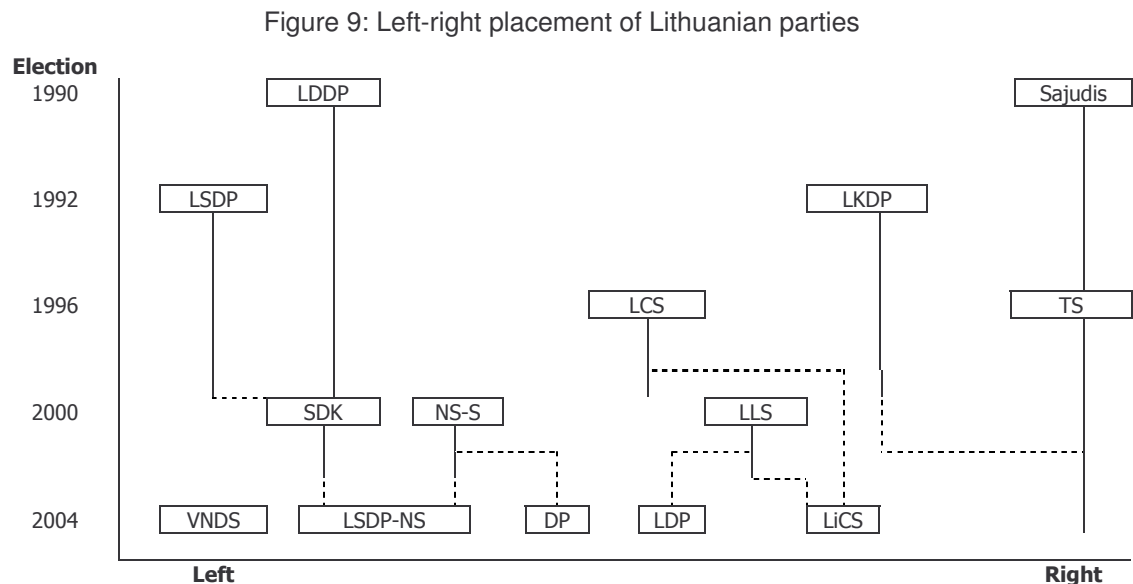
<sup>21</sup> Another party ran under the LDP initials in the early post-communist elections. This is not the same party.

<sup>22</sup> NS-S left the coalition government in April 2006.



### *Summary, Left-Right placement of Lithuanian parties*

The structuration of the party system development in Lithuania is presented along the left-right cleavage in Figure 9. The figure only includes parties obtaining mandates in the PR-elections. Black line indicates continuation of party organisation and representation in parliament. Dotted line indicates mergers and splits.



Source: Zeruolis (1998), Duvold and Jurkynas (2004), Jelinskaite (2001), verification by Jurkynas

Figure 9 illustrates that the left-right dominance of LDDP and Sajudis (later TS) has been challenged by new parties operating in the space between these two parties. It also shows that the number of parties obtaining mandates in the PR-election is steady increasing.

#### **4.1.2 Post-communist cleavage structure**

Although the topic of this thesis is the urban-rural cleavage, it is important to account for the other cleavages scholars have found in Lithuania. In the early 1990s, Lithuania was said to be the only ex-Soviet republic with a dominating left-right cleavage and a corresponding stable party structure, similar of Western Europe. Zeruolis (1998), Bakke (2002), Holm-Hansen (2002), and Berglund et al. (2004) found that the socio-economical left-right cleavage was the most important for structuring the party contestation in Lithuania. Most parties and government alternatives were nicely structured along this axis.

Holm-Hansen (2002: 79) argued that the left-right dimension was found in five other cleavages having structural importance in the early phases of Lithuanian post-communist party politics. These five cleavages were questions concerning:

- Political system; democracy vs. authoritarianism
- Defining the demos; inclusive vs. exclusive nationalism
- Economical transition; gradual vs. rapid
- Communist heritage; acknowledge vs. denial
- Foreign policy; relationship to Russia

Arrangement of the political system was the most important issue up to the approval of the new Lithuanian constitution in 1992. One of the main topics was the powers of the president and the institutional framework of the re-established independent Lithuanian state. Sajudis wanted strong presidential powers building upon the heritage from the Interwar era, while the reformed ex-communists, Lithuanian Democratic Labour Party (LDDP) supported an institutional framework similar to the parliamentary systems in Western Europe. Definition of the demos was related to the status of the ethnic minorities in the country. Here, Sajudis represented a more exclusive nationalism, while LDDP was more inclusive in its nationalist approach. According to Holm-Hansen (2002: 80) the Lithuanian parties were not very different regarding their take on the issue of economical transition. Both Sajudis and LDDP were relatively gradual in their approach and focused upon social harmony. One important exception was the agricultural sector, where Sajudis favoured speedy reforms and decollectivisation. This issue of gradual vs. rapid economical transition developed into political questions regarding free market economy vs. welfare policy when the actual transition was over. The division between Sajudis and LDDP was further deepened by the debate about the communist heritage. Sajudis viewed all elements from the communist regime, such as LDDP, as traitors of the Lithuanian nation, while LDDP portrayed itself as protectors of the Lithuanian nation under Soviet communism. The relationship to Russia was the last cleavage Holm-Hansen saw as central in Lithuanian politics. LDDP was more open than Sajudis on further economical cooperation with Russia.

All these cleavages were essentially represented by the two major opponents in Lithuanian party politics at this period, LDDP and Sajudis, later Homeland Union (TS). With time the questions regarding the political system, the demos, and the communist heritage lost their structural capacity in the party system, and economical issues shaped as market vs. social security arguments became more central (Holm-Hansen 2002: 80). Bakke (2002: 239) suggested a cleavage pattern that corresponded with the ones Holm-Hansen found. The economical left-right and the communist heritage were, according to Bakke, the most decisive

regarding government coalitions.

Berglund et al. (1998 and 2004) also operated with a cleavage pattern reflecting a left-right structuration of the party system between LDDP and Sajudis. In addition they introduced the religious vs. secular cleavage, which fitted into the already suggested left-right dimension. Berglund et al (2004: 602) operated with the following cleavages in Lithuania:

- Religious vs. secular
- Workers vs. owners
- Social democrats vs. communists
- Protection vs. free markets
- Apparatus vs. forums/fronts

The religious-secular cleavage was represented by parties defending catholic values and parties attacking religious values, arguing for a secular society (Berglund et al. 2004: 600). The Lithuanian Christian Democratic Party (LKDP) and LDDP represented this cleavage. Workers vs. owners can be seen as an extension of the already mentioned left-right cleavage between LDDP and TS. Social democrats vs. communists was related to a conflict between nationally vs. internationally oriented socialism. Here, LDDP, representing the heritage of communism, stood against the historical national oriented Lithuanian Social Democratic Party (LSDP). The last two cleavages were related to the transition and the outcomes of this process. Protection vs. free market cleavage were parties advocating free market policy, irrespective of the short term negative effects, while parties wanting to preserve subsidies for unprofitable industries, where at the protection side. Apparatus vs. forum/fronts cleavage were parties derived from the old communist ruling apparatus or parties representing a direct continuation of the early anti-communist fronts (Berglund et al. 2004: 600). In Lithuania LDDP and Sajudis represented these two poles.

Zeruolis (1998: 127), with reference to Nørgaard (1996), argued that the left-right divide in Lithuania reflected seven issue dimensions. All these issue dimensions had to be taken into account when structuring the Lithuanian political landscape, at least in the early 1990s:

- Perception of the nation state
- Religion
- Land restitution
- Perception of the Soviet era
- Industrial policy
- National dimension
- International dimension

Zeruolis' point was somewhat similar to the already underlined assumption made by the other scholars. The different issue dimensions corresponded with the left-right cleavage in Lithuania, represented by the ex-communist LDDP and Sajudis. The perception of the nation state was the same as Holm-Hansen referred to as definition of the demos, which were the political issues related to the status of ethnic minorities. Religion could be seen as the same religious-secular cleavage as Berglund et al. suggested. The issue of land restitution was more interesting regarding the topic of this thesis, the urban-rural cleavage. As Holm-Hansen pointed out above, the economical transition only generated one open political conflict in Lithuania, decollectivisation of the agricultural sector. Sajudis wanted to remove all traces of communism with a rapid transition of the collectivised farm structure. They advocated in favour of shutting down all collective farms as fast as possible and impose a restitution of the Interwar era owner structure. LDDP was more reluctant and had a gradual approach. It is hard to argue that this is the same as an urban-rural cleavage although it obviously will have an urban-rural divide. I find this political issue much more related to settlement with agricultural owner-structure during communism and not a cleavage between urban and rural economy. The issue dimension covering the perception of the Soviet era, correspond with what Holm-Hansen called the communist heritage or judgement of the past. Industrial policy is somewhat related to Berglund et al.'s protection vs. free market cleavage, where the question was how fast and how much the industrial sector should be reformed. The last two dimensions, national and international, can be viewed as Lithuanian national identity and Lithuania's relationship to foreign countries, with special attention to Russia.

### ***Summary, cleavages in Lithuania***

Table 3 summarises the discussion about the presence of cleavages in Lithuania. The different authors operated with different names of their cleavages or issue dimensions. The seven cleavages mentioned in Table 3 incorporate all the 17 cleavages or issue dimensions that

Holm-Hansen, Berglund et al. and Zeruolis used. The left-right cleavage involves issues connected to the economical transition, workers vs. owners, protection vs. free market and industrial policy. The communist heritage cleavage covers all the abovementioned cleavages related to the judgement of the Soviet era and communism as a whole. Issues related to land restitution and apparatus vs. forums/fronts are integrated into this cleavage. Nationalism sums up all the different political issues related to identity and minorities in Lithuania. The remaining cleavages should be clear.

Table 3: Cleavages in Lithuania

<b>Cleavages</b>	<b>Authors<sup>23</sup></b>			
	Bakke	Berglund et al	Holm-Hansen	Zeruolis
Left-Right	+	+	+	+
Communist heritage	+	+	+	+
Nationalism	+	-	+	+
Religious-Secular	-	+	-	+
Soc.dem vs. communists	-	+	-	-
Political system	-	-	+	-
Foreign policy	-	-	+	+

As shown in Table 3, all authors agreed that party competition in Lithuania was structured along a left-right cleavage and a communist heritage cleavage. LDDP was more leftist and pragmatic in their judgement of the past, while Sajudis was more to the right and sceptic towards elements of the communist regime. All the other cleavages were also divided between LDDP and Sajudis, although the authors disagreed about the structural capacity of these remaining cleavages. None of the scholars pointed to the structuring capacity of an urban-rural cleavage in Lithuania.

## **4.2 Urban-rural cleavage, according to Lipset and Rokkan**

The division between rural and urban interests was devoted extensive discussion in Lipset and Rokkan's *"Party Systems and Voter Behaviour"* (Lipset and Rokkan 1967). They recognised that under certain circumstances and under certain structures, parties in defend for rural economical interests emerged. This cleavage illustrated two essential mechanisms of their model; the correspondence between societal development and political interests, and the interaction and crosscutting effects of cleavages.

The correspondence between societal development and political interests related to the origin of the urban-rural cleavage where "The conflict between landed and urban interests was

<sup>23</sup> Although Bakke (2002) and Berglund et al. (1998) built their classification upon Holm-Hansen and Zeruolis, their conclusions are somewhat different.

centered in the commodity market” (Lipset and Rokkan 1967: 21). The division between urban and rural interests was a political reaction to the changing role of individual sectors of the economy during the Industrial revolution. When the primary producing communities entered the national money and market economy, the farmers pushed forward a policy in favour of heavier taxation of the expanding urban economies. The farmers’ struggle for democracy contained an element of economic opposition towards the expanding urban economy.

Regarding the urban-rural cleavage’s potential to affect the already existing cleavage structure, Lipset and Rokkan argued that since this cleavage originated from rural economical interests it especially affected the structuration of the rural party competition. In addition to the centre-periphery cleavage, which of course also had a urban-rural dimension but was mainly a conflict evolved around cultural issues, the urban-rural cleavage brought defend of economical interests to the rural electorate. This could either strengthen or crosscut the already existing cleavage structure.

#### **4.2.1 Agrarian parties, according to Lipset and Rokkan**

Agrarian parties originated as defenders of the rural economy against urban industry in issues like tariff levels for agricultural products (Lipset and Rokkan 1967: 47). But this does not mean that agrarian parties would emerge wherever there were farmers. Other parties could defend rural interests simply because the urban-rural division overlapped with other cleavages, such as for instance a religious-secular or the centre-periphery cleavage. Christian democratic parties or ethnic minority parties might therefore represent a rural part of the electorate, although these parties often represent cultural identity more than economical interests of the agrarian sector.

According to Lipset and Rokkan, the organisational expression of the urban-rural cleavage varied in Western Europe. The distinct agrarian parties only emerged where the peripheral cultural opposition corresponded with and reinforced conflicts regarding rural economical issues (Lipset and Rokkan 1967: 20). Agrarian parties emerged in countries or regions where these four criteria were fulfilled:

- 1) cities and industrial centres were numerically weak at the time of the decisive extensions of the suffrage
- 2) the bulk of the agricultural population were active family-size farming and either owned their farms themselves or were legally protected lease-holders largely independent of socially superior landowners
- 3) important cultural barriers between the countryside and the cities and much resistance to the incorporation of farm production in the capitalist economy of the cities
- 4) the Catholic Church was without significant influence

(Lipset and Rokkan 1967: 45-46)

### *Cleavage-party relation*

It is worth elaborating shortly on the relationship between these four presuppositions and the emergence of agrarian parties. Agrarian parties did not emerge all over Western Europe despite the fact that there were numerous farmers in the region<sup>24</sup>. The concentration of wealth and political control in the cities, and the ownership structure in the rural economy were a decisive element for the emergence of successful agrarian parties (ibid 1967: 20).

The first presupposition, weak cities and industrial centres at the extension of the suffrage, created problems with cultural standardisation during the state and nation building process. Few and weak city centres meant that the state could not fully control or penetrate the territory. It was easier for the periphery to resist influence from, and to organise political opposition towards, the centre. The importance of farmers being freeholders on small or midsize farms, the second presupposition, was underlined by Lipset and Rokkan and further by Urwin (1980) as a crucial point to explain the emergence of agrarian parties in Western Europe. The size of the farms reflected the rural power distribution where small, midsize farms meant more equal production units. These farms had no urgent need for hired labour force, the farmer and his family could simply do the work by themselves. Thereby they avoided becoming employers. The labour-capital conflict did not exist on these farms, which had consequences regarding the later mobilisation of the rural working class. In addition, the greater concentration of production units, economic power and social prestige, the easier it was for the larger landowners to control, mobilise and align with the rural voters. The power of landowners gave the farmers potentially greater payoffs of political alliance with the

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<sup>24</sup> In Western Europe agrarian parties only emerged in the protestant cantons in Switzerland and in the Nordic countries (Lipset and Rokkan 1967: 21).

landowners, even though they often represented contrasting interests. The third presupposition dealt with the interaction of cultural barriers and economical interests between cities and the countryside. Contrasting cultural identity between centre and periphery, and the countryside's general scepticism towards market economy integration, strengthened the periphery's unifying forces in the battle against centre domination. The scepticism towards market economy integration was also important to explain the potential rural class division between landowners and tenant or freeholder farmers. The landowners did not always share the scepticism towards market economy integration with the small-scale freeholder farmers. Landowners had large production units and could hire tenant farmers as a source of cheap labour force to increase the farming efficiency. Small or mid-sized freeholder farmers were more dependent on stable prices on agricultural products and protection from competition. Regarding the last presupposition, the influence of the Catholic Church was central to the standardisation process led by the centre. Absent Catholic authority weakened the centre's control with the societal and political developments in the periphery. The Catholic Church was a very crucial political organiser in the society, especially on the countryside. The absence of strong Catholic Church opened the rural electorate for other political alternatives, for instance agrarian parties (Lipset and Rokkan 1967: 44-45).

Although Central and Eastern Europe was not accounted for in Lipset and Rokkan's model, one should notice that the presence of a strong Catholic Church did not hinder the emergence of strong agrarian parties in CEE during the Interwar era. Agrarian parties were in some of the Catholic countries, such as Poland, Croatia and Lithuania, the most successive, and overall larger than agrarian parties in Protestant northern Europe. Some of these agrarian parties were openly anti-clerical, while others were more redeeming in their approach to the Catholic Church (Rothschild 1974, Seim 1994). It is important to be aware of the empirical limitations of Lipset and Rokkan's model.

### **4.3 *Urban-rural cleavage in Lithuania?***

The four presuppositions of Lipset and Rokkan (1967: 45) constitute the point of departure when arguing that an urban-rural cleavage can be evident in the Lithuanian party system. It must be remembered that Lipset and Rokkan's cleavage model was related to their model of state and nation building in Western Europe. The cleavage formation process occurred under very different conditions in Lithuania and CEE in general than in the Western European context.



Holm-Hansen (2002: 84), Adomenas (2005: 53) and Zeruolis (1998: 130) stated that an urban-rural cleavage was not manifested in parties representing agricultural interests in Lithuania. The same conclusion was reached by Bakke (2002: 239) and Berglund et al. (2004: 602): The urban-rural cleavage was not viewed as having structuring capacity upon the party competition in Lithuania.

Respondents affiliated with the parties of the right, the TS-LK and LKDP, feel that right-wing parties represent these interests: the other respondents on the whole feel that left-wing parties care most about agriculture (Zeruolis 1998: 130).

Out of this one can assume that the agricultural issue did not divide the electorate along any party lines. After the fall of communism the countryside has experienced a dramatic drop in living standards. Regarding income level and unemployment the countryside lags further and further behind the cities. The increasing disparity between urban and rural areas could be regarded as a source of salient political division in the country (Duvold and Jurkynas 2004: 149).

#### **4.3.1 Lipset and Rokkan's presuppositions in Lithuania**

The theoretical foundation for the existence of an agrarian party representing the urban-rural cleavage in Lithuania is first of all found in the position of the agricultural sector. The share of employment in agriculture constitutes potential constituencies for agrarian parties (Kostecky 2002: 104). Regarding the political manifestation of this cleavage, Lipset and Rokkan's four presuppositions can be a guiding line. These four presuppositions are by no mean clear, which constitute a problem regarding empirical measurement.

##### ***Weak cities and industrial centres***

According to Lipset and Rokkan, the position of the cities was important for state and nation building elites to control its opponents. But what is a weak city and how can it be measured? Weak cities can refer to the number of cities, degree of urbanism, city structure, economical dominance and so on. All these factors may affect the urban-rural political relationship, but the Lipset and Rokkan assumption can be interpreted as follows; the more urbanised and industrialised a country is, the lesser the rural economical opposition towards the centre.

The heavy industrialisation initiated by the communists changed economical, societal demographical structures in Lithuania. After the fall of communism the country has gone through agricultural reforms such as decollectivisation and transition to market economy. This has overall decreased the number farmers and the importance of agriculture in the economy. Still, the rural population constitutes one third of Lithuania's total population (Lithuanian Statistical Department, 2005 census). The pressure towards the agricultural sector and farmers overall becoming the transition losers give favourable conditions for an agrarian party defending the interests of this group. Table 4 shows how GDP's share of agriculture has decreased in Lithuania since 1994.

Table 4: GDP's share of agriculture in Lithuania

Year	Percent
1994	21,1
1996	20,1
1998	14,3
2000	10,0
2002	5,9

Source: Duvold and Jurkynas 2004: 149

### *Family-size farming*

The agricultural owner structure can for instance be indicated by the size and number of farms. The rural economical interests generating an urban-rural cleavage presuppose that farmers own their farms. Communism as a political and economical system broke down the entire owner structure with small family owned farms over the region<sup>25</sup>. The disruption of a continuous owner structure in the agricultural sector is of course not accounted for in the Lipset and Rokkan framework.

The collectivisation of agriculture and organisation of rural civil society organisation, imposed and controlled by the communist regimes, changed the entire production structure. The small family-owned farms were transformed into large co-operations owned either collectively by communities of farmers (kolkhoz) or by the state (sovkhoz). The farm was no longer a family-owned property to be inherited by the younger generation, but instead a gigantic production unit ran according to ideological principals in a system under total state and party control (Lie 2004: 497). In addition to change the production structure, the collectivisation of the agricultural sector impacted the farmers' mentality and identity. The farmers more or less lost their self-conceit and the traditions connected to the countryside culture (Seim 1994: 456). The farmer was no longer connected to his land, but to his work.

<sup>25</sup> Poland and Yugoslavia were exceptions, here most farmers remained freeholders.

The agricultural decollectivisation and economic reforms that were initiated right after the fall of communism had distributive consequences, especially for the rural economy. The overall decline in the region's GDP after the transition came from recession in the rural economy. The dissolving of the collective farms resulted in huge rural unemployment, and the number of farmers and agricultural workers decreased dramatically after the fall of communism. Therefore, the rural population and the farmers can be considered as the losers of the transition to free market economy (Lie 2004: 493, Johannsen 2003: 292 and Tavits 2005: 288). In the Lithuanian context, the decollectivisation process has been a re-establishment of freeholder farming. The farm collectives were divided into smaller units and returned to the previous owners from the Interwar era, along the so-called Restitution model. By doing this, Lithuania now fulfils the presupposition of freeholder family farmers for the emergence of agrarian parties.

The fertile conditions for agrarian parties during the Interwar era do simply not exist today because the electorate is not composed of so many potential agrarian party voters. Still, the number of farmers, the rural population in general, and pressure towards the agricultural sector, constitute a conflict potential for the emergence of agrarian parties. In 2003, more than 98 percent of all farms in Lithuania were freeholder family farms. The average size of the farms was only 2.8 hectares (Lithuanian Statistical Department, Agricultural census 2003: 11). According to the 2005 census 545 381 Lithuanians were employed in agriculture, or 15,7 percent of the population (Lithuanian Statistical Department, Agricultural census 2005). Table 5 below presents percentage of agricultural employment by regions in Lithuania in 2005. The share of agricultural employment is lowest around urban regions such as Vilnius, Kaunas, and Klaipeda while the share increases in more rural regions.

Table 5: Agricultural employment by regions 2005

<b>Region</b>	<b>Employment in agriculture</b>
Vilnius	8,9%
Kaunas	11,4%
Klaipeda	11,9%
Siauliai	19,3%
Telsiu	19,6%
Panevezio	19,8%
Alytaus	23,2%
Utenos	23,6%
Marijampole	26,1%
Taurages	29,8%

Source: Agricultural census 2005

### *Cultural barriers between the countryside and the cities*

This presupposition is maybe the most difficult to measure because Lipset and Rokkan never defined what a cultural barrier was. However, one can assume that a cultural barrier is related to the different sources of identity between urban and rural communities. This source can be language or religion, but also less definitive and measurable elements such as different perception of values, “the good life”, national identity and so on. For instance Duvold and Jurkynas (2004) referred to “the rural way of life” as a distinct rural feature without saying what this is.

Political, economical, cultural and social conflicts have throughout history been strongly related to tensions between countryside and cities, not only in Lithuania but the CEE region as a whole (Rothschild 1974, Seim 1994). The numerous rural population combined with the low level of industrialisation giving agriculture a dominate position, have kept the barriers between cities and countryside highly relevant for political conflicts. Farmer’s scepticism and resistance to the incorporation of farm production in the capitalist economy of the cities became visible during the democratic interlude of the Interwar era when strong agrarian parties emerged all over the region, also in Lithuania. The political conflict was further intensified with different voting rules between rural and urban constituencies during the Interwar era (Urwin 1980: 228). In Lithuania an urban-rural divide has been evident in the two latest presidential elections. In the 2002 election, the support for the two main contenders, Rolandas Paksas and Valdas Adamkus, divided the Lithuanian electorate along an urban-rural spectre. Paksas scored particular well among rural and deprived segments of the population, leaving Adamkus with majority in only a handful of urban constituencies (Duvold and Jurkynas 2004: 161). The same pattern was somewhat confirmed with the 2004 presidential election between Kazimira Prunskiene and Valdas Adamkus.

The rural area in Lithuania has undergone enormous structural changes and modernisation the last hundred years. The tensions between urban and rural have increased because of the dramatic decrease in rural living standards after the agricultural decollectivisation. The suspicion about land commercialisation is also obvious among the rural population in Lithuania today (Duvold and Jurkynas 2004: 149) and the urban-rural cleavage should at least theoretically have the capability of structuring party competition in the region (Tavits 2005: 288).

### ***Catholic Church without significant influence***

Regarding the fourth presupposition for the emergence of agrarian parties, position of the Catholic Church, the measurement of religion's position is very difficult, but official statistics regarding the number of Catholics among the population or church attendance can indicate the Catholic Church's influence in Lithuania. Lithuania does not fulfil the last Lipset and Rokkan presupposition since Lithuania is a Catholic country. This can be seen as an argument against the presence of agrarian parties in Lithuania, since the urban-rural cleavage might overlap with other more dominate cleavages. 80 percent of the population regards themselves as Catholics (Holm Hansen 2002: 83, with reference to Samalavicius 1995: 130).

### **4.3.2 Urban-rural cleavage as other cleavages?**

The analysis in Chapter 6 can reveal three possible outcomes regarding the presence of the urban-rural cleavage:

- Absence of an urban-rural voting pattern, presumably no urban-rural cleavage
- Presence of an urban-rural voting pattern, reflecting an urban-rural cleavage
- Presence of an urban-rural voting pattern, reflecting other cleavages than the urban-rural cleavage

The first and second assumption should be clear, the third need some elaboration. The presence of an urban-rural voting pattern can mean that this pattern overlaps with other cleavages. Since the data sets in this analysis are aggregated structural data, not respondents on individual level, the urban-rural cleavage may overlap with other cleavages, such as a left-right cleavage (Duvold and Jurkynas 2004: 151). Rural constituencies were heavily dominated by LDDP, especially in the first post-communist elections. Holm-Hansen (2002: 84) regarded LDDP as the party advocating agrarian interest in Lithuania, without referring to this as an urban-rural cleavage. The rural dwellers were in many cases former workers from collective farms which experienced a drop in living standards after Sajudis and later Homeland Union (TS), initiated a rapid decollectivisation process in the early 1990s. They supported a speedy transition to market economy, dismantling of collective farm production and re-establishment of Interwar era family farm structure. LDDP represented a more gradual approach in this issue focusing on welfare and social security for the farmers (Holm-Hansen 2002: 80).

Farmers and rural inhabitants became the losers of the transition and had obvious reasons to be suspicious of market economy integration. Since LDDP was softer on decollectivisation than

the other parties, they became the defenders of the agrarian electorate's interests. The typical LDDP-electorate was the less educated, rural and ethnic minorities (Zeruolis 1998: 134) or described as the "rural and urban poor" (Adomenas 2005: 53). Sajudis, on the other hand, was urban in its outlook with anti-protectionist, big-business oriented policies, supported by upper age brackets, well educated city dwellers (Zeruolis 1998: 134).

Lithuania can be said to fulfil three out the four presuppositions for the emergence of agrarian parties, representing the urban-rural cleavage. One might argue that the social characteristics of the Lithuanian Christian Democratic Party's (LKDP) electorate; less educated, elderly, voters in rural constituencies emphasising moral profile and capacity to solve societal problems (Zeruolis 1998: 134), correlated with the social characteristics of a would-be agrarian party representing the urban-rural cleavage. This can lead to the conclusion that the conflict between economical interest of the city and the ones of the countryside overlaps with a religious-secular cleavage, as Berglund et al. suggested (1998, 2004). Agrarian parties will therefore not emerge because of the presence of Catholic Church and the LKDP. Duvold and Jurkynas (2004: 150) did not support the argument that agrarian interests had allied with Christian Democratic or conservative forces in Lithuania. Homeland Union (TS), regarded as the conservative party in Lithuania, is urban in its outlook, while LKDP enjoyed to a certain degree rural support. After the 2000-election the LKDP merged with TS and the religious dimension of Lithuanian politics disappeared as an independent party alternative. Jelinskaite (2001: 92), with reference to Novagrockiene (1998: 302), argued that despite the fact that LKDP mobilised on catholic values, the religious-secular cleavage was not relevant for structuring Lithuania's party politics. The division between transition winners and transition losers is probably more sufficient to explain an urban-rural disparity in Lithuania.

## Chapter 5

# Methodology

By applying the Reversed cleavage model this thesis will study which parties have represented the urban-rural cleavage in the last parliamentary elections in Lithuania. In addition to correlation analyses for the three latest elections, a regression analysis is conducted on the 2004-election. The assumption is that parties can change as the organisational expression of the cleavage, but the cleavage itself, in this case the urban-rural, sustains.

### **5.1 Data**

The Lithuanian National Electoral Committee provides electoral results on constituency and polling district level. The newer the election is the more detailed the information is. Therefore, the further analysis focuses mainly upon the last three parliamentary elections in Lithuania, 1996, 2000 and 2004, with special attention on the last one. The analysis is based upon election results on constituency, regional and district level<sup>26</sup>.

#### *Units*

Because of the SMD-election, all 71 constituencies in Lithuania are divided into more or less equal sized units regarding the number of voters. This is a problem because the agricultural employment data is on district level. Since the 1996 and 2000 elections are not available on polling district level, 19 constituencies are combined into seven analysis units comparable with the aggregated agricultural employment data. The analysis of the 1996 and 2000 elections therefore has 59 units on constituency level, while the 2004-election has 106 units on district level.

#### **5.1.1 Urban-rural cleavage**

To identify the urban-rural cleavage in post-communist Lithuania, two variables are applied; urbanism and percentage agricultural employment. These two variables will most probably overlap; large cities will have fewer agricultural workers because agriculture is naturally related to rural constituencies. Still, it is important to include them both in the analysis because they identify two separate elements. First of all, the size of the cities can indicate the

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<sup>26</sup> Data on polling district level is only available from the 2004-election and this election is therefore more accurate than 1996 and 2000 elections, which are on constituency level.

economical production structure. In larger cities other economical sectors, such as industry, business, productive and social infrastructure in addition to agriculture, can at least theoretically have a dominant position. Secondly, the Tingsten's law on social gravity centre (Karvonen and Grönlund 2003: 229), predicts that the dominant social group in a given constituency affects the voting behaviour of other social groups as well. A high percentage of agricultural workers can for instance affect the voting pattern of the constituency's city centre.

The analysis between the urban-rural variable and support for parties is itself not enough to identify the urban-rural cleavage's capacity to structure party competition in the 1996, 2000 and 2004 Seimas elections. Parties representing this cleavage should at least theoretically only have electorate representing either urban or rural constituencies, not both. The relationship between the parties' support is important to control and explain the result.

### ***Urbanism***

According to the Law on territorial administrative division of the Republic of Lithuania (passed 19 July 1994), urban is defined as cities or towns with closely built permanent dwellings and with a resident population of more than 3.000 of which two-thirds of workers are involved in industry, social infrastructure and business<sup>27</sup>. All other polling districts and constituencies are rural. The urban classification is further ascending according to either the percentage urban population within the constituency (1996 and 2000), or the number of urban inhabitants (2004).

### ***Agricultural employment***

The Department of Statistics to the Government of Republic of Lithuania provides data on the other variable in the urban-rural dimension, percentage agricultural workers. The data is aggregated into either polling district or constituency level. The agricultural employment data from 2005 is used in all three analyses.

## ***5.2 Defining agrarian parties***

Without going into the debate of defining political parties (Ware 1996), this thesis simply states that parties seek to influence the state through competing in elections. Regarding the emergence of new parties, a new party is a party without an independent parliamentary faction. Simply stated agrarian parties can be parties that rely heavily upon support from the agrarian population where the employment in agriculture relates to the potential

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<sup>27</sup> Not all the smaller cities have their own polling district in the 2004-election. They are classified as rural.



constituencies of the agrarian parties (Kostecky 2002: 103). There are mainly four ways of classifying agrarian parties (Urwin 1980: 165):

- 1) Parties calling themselves agrarian parties
- 2) Parties advocating agrarian issues
- 3) Parties attracting the majority of farmers
- 4) Parties where farmers constitute the majority of their electorate

Lipset and Rokkan's cleavage model focused upon the structural composition of the electorate and viewed political parties as agents acting on behalf of the electorate's interests and preferences. The role of parties as agents acting on the behalf of self-interests were not accounted for in their framework, which has consequences regarding the definition of parties. All the four abovementioned characteristics relate to parties as representatives of the rural economical interests and whether this should be decided by the parties' profile or the parties' electorate. One of the assumptions in the Reversed cleavage model is that parties are weakly organised, are disconnected from the electorate, elite-controlled without ideological liabilities and not built upon representation of specific societal interests. This makes parties shifting. To define parties as cleavage representatives one should therefore look at the electorate's structural characteristics

### 5.2.1 Agrarian parties according to the Reversed cleavage model

We assume that either the electorate vote along an urban-rural pattern, or they do not. Parties, being the organisational expression of the cleavage, can be divided into "Agrarian party name", meaning parties portraying themselves as defenders of agrarian interests, and "Agrarian policy", parties without agrarian reference but with agrarian friendly policy. Figure 10 illustrates how the agrarian parties might be approached to fit the assumptions of the Reversed cleavage model.

Figure 10: Agrarian parties according to the Reversed cleavage model

		PARTY	
		Agrarian party name	Agrarian policy
ELECTORATE	No urban-rural voting pattern	Box 1) Agrarian party in name, but <i>without</i> substantial support among farmers	Box 2) No parties for farmers, both in party name and among electorate
	Urban-rural voting pattern	Box 3) Agrarian party in name <i>with</i> substantial support among farmers	Box 4) Farmers vote for a party without an agrarian reference in their party name

The upper half of Figure 10 refers to cases where there is no urban-rural voting pattern. There might be a theoretical potential of having this cleavage, such as for instance numerically many farmers, but the electorate do not structure their party preference along this division. Some parties may still portray themselves as agrarians, with for instance an agrarian party name (Box 1) trying to catch the potential rural electorate. The situation can also be that no parties try to catch the potential electorate evolving from the potential urban-rural cleavage (Box 2). No parties portray themselves as agrarians and the electorate do not cast votes along an urban-rural division. The lower half of Figure 10 refers to cases where the electorate vote along an urban-rural voting pattern. Parties can represent this voting pattern by referring to defend of agrarian interests in their party name (Box 3), or the party competition can be structured along the urban-rural cleavage without having parties referring to agrarian interests in their name (Box 4). Still, the electorate identify the party with this cleavage.

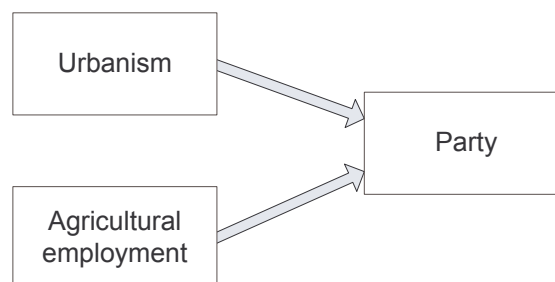
The presence of an urban-rural voting pattern is not depended upon a party calling itself agrarian, but whether the electorate identify a party defending these interests. Box 3 and Box 4 here can be regarded as cleavage representatives of the urban-rural cleavage. The cleavage representation can be maintained by many different parties, but it is the electorate's preferences that decide the party's cleavage belonging.

## Chapter 6

# Analysis

This chapter presents the analysis results of the urban-rural cleavage's structuring capacity upon party preferences in the last three parliamentary elections in Lithuania. The study only includes parties obtaining mandates in the PR-part of the elections. The assumed relationship of the analysis is presented in Figure 11. The support for parties is viewed according to the urban-rural cleavage, identified by urbanism and percentage agricultural employment.

Figure 11: Assumed relationship of the analysis



### 6.1 *Urban-rural cleavage in the 1996-election?*

After winning the 1992-landslide election, the ex-communists Lithuanian Democratic Labour Party (LDDP) suffered a heavy loss four years later. Many Lithuanians, especially in rural areas, experienced decreasing living standards during the LDDP government. The rural turn out was also lower in the 1996-election compared to the 1992-election (Holm-Hansen 2002: 86, Jelinskaite 2001: 51, Adomenas 2005: 66). This weakened the support for LDDP. Table 6 presents the election result for parties obtaining mandates in the 1996 PR-election.

Table 6: Election result 1996

Party	Percent
Homeland Union (TS)	31,3
Lithuanian Christian Democratic Party (LKDP)	10,4
Lithuanian Democratic Labour Party (LDDP)	10,0
Lithuanian Centre Union (LCS)	8,7
Lithuanian Social Democratic Party (LSDP)	6,9

Source: Holm-Hansen 2002: 89

LDDP's electoral defeat was less evident in the agricultural constituencies of northern and eastern Lithuania than in urban areas. The party maintained around twenty percent of the

votes in rural constituencies. The Sajudis offspring Homeland Union (TS) became the largest party, winning almost all constituencies both in the SMD and the PR-election. TS got 31,3 percent of the votes and was rather successful all over the country. It gained votes in almost every constituency compared with the 1992-results.

### 6.1.1 Correlation results

The relationship between the variables measuring the urban-rural cleavage and party preference, are measured by Pearson's *r* and Significance level. Since the variables of this analysis are metric, the correlation coefficient Pearson's *r* is applied. Pearson's *r* goes from -1 to +1 and indicates direction and strength of the correlation between the variables. 0 indicates no correlation, while 1 indicates perfect correlated relationship between the variables. +/- point to whether the correlation is positive, paired increasing-increasing/decreasing-decreasing values, or whether the correlation is negative, paired increasing-decreasing/decreasing-increasing values. Significance level reflects the probability of assuming a non-relationship between the variables (Grønmo 2004). In this analysis the correlation have to satisfy either 0.05 or 0.01 significance level to be considered as valid. Table 7 below shows the correlation results form the 1996-election. The left column, containing Urbanism and Agrar, indicates the variables measuring the urban-rural cleavage. The upper rows of the table refer to parties obtaining mandates in the PR-election.

Table 7: Correlation results 1996-election

	<b>Urbanism</b>	<b>Agrar</b>	<b>LCS</b>	<b>LDDP</b>	<b>LKDP</b>	<b>LSDP</b>	<b>TS</b>
<i>Urbanism</i>	1	-,964**	,423**	-,439**	-,180	-,174	,108
<i>Agrar</i>	-,964**	1	-,380**	,419**	,170	,156	-,105
** Correlation significant at 0.01 level, 2-tailed.							N= 59
* Correlation significant at 0.05 level, 2-tailed.							

In Table 7, Lithuanian Centre Union (LCS) and LDDP have a correlation significant at a 0.01 when correlated with Urbanism. The positive correlation between LCS and Urbanism indicates a covariant pattern in the increasing size of cities and the increasing support for LCS. LCS was a popular party among middle aged, high income, well educated urban voters (Zeruolis 1998: 134). It received just above eight percent of the votes in the 1996-election. The negative correlation of Urbanism and LDDP in Table 7 supports the assumption that the major electoral defeat of this party, compared to the last election, had an urban-rural dimension; LDDP desertion was much higher in urban than in rural constituencies. The party experienced major losses especially in the urban constituencies in and around Vilnius, Kaunas and Klaipeda, receiving less than ten percent of the votes. In addition it confirms the

assumptions of this party being mainly supported by less educated, rural dwellers (Zeruolis 1998: 134). The pattern is further confirmed in the parties' correlation with percentage employed in agriculture. Only LCS and LDDP correlate significantly at 0.01 level with agricultural employment. LDDP correlates positively, meaning that there is a significant pattern between increasing percentage agricultural employment and increasing support for LDDP. LCS has the opposite result, correlating negative with the percentage of agricultural workers.

It is worth mentioning that the election winner TS did not correlate significantly with any of the variables measuring the urban-rural cleavage. The insignificant Pearson's *r* indicates that the party performed well all over the country and that the urban-rural dimension did not affect the support for this party.

### *Inter-party correlation*

In Table 8 below, the correlation between parties is presented. This is a way of controlling the patterns found in the former correlation analysis between variables measuring the urban-rural cleavage and parties in Table 7. The support for each party is correlated with the support for all the other parties obtaining mandates in the PR-election. Positive correlation indicates a covariant pattern between the parties' support, while a negative correlation indicates a pattern of opposite electoral support for the parties.

Table 8: Inter-party correlation 1996-election

	<b>LCS</b>	<b>LDDP</b>	<b>LKDP</b>	<b>LSDP</b>	<b>TS</b>
<i>LCS</i>	1	-,282*	-,077	,036	-,039
<i>LDDP</i>	-,282*	1	,345**	,561**	-,014
<i>LKDP</i>	-,077	,345**	1	,345**	,044
<i>LSDP</i>	,036	,561**	,345**	1	,167
<i>TS</i>	-,039	-,014	,044	,167	1

\*\* Correlation significant at 0.01 level, 2-tailed.

\* Correlation significant at 0.05 level, 2-tailed.

N= 59

The results from Table 8 shows that it is only the support for LDDP that correlates significantly at 0.05 level and negatively with the support for LCS. Increasing support for LCS gives decreasing support for LDDP. Although the support for Lithuanian Christian Democratic Party (LKDP) and Lithuanian Social Democratic Party (LSDP) correlate positively and significant with the support for LDDP, they did not correlate significant with Urbanism and Agrar in Table 7. The support for LKDP and LSDP was more equally

distributed between urban and rural constituencies. A final point to be made in the correlation of the 1996-election is the insignificant results of the election winner TS. The support for this party does not correlate significantly with the variables measuring the urban-rural cleavage or with the support of the other parties. Out of this one can derive the argument that the electoral success of TS was nationwide.

The negative and significant correlation between LDDP and LCS, together with their opposite direction regarding Urbanism and Agrar, suggest that these two parties represented the opposing sides in the urban-rural cleavage in the 1996-election.

## **6.2 Urban-rural cleavage in the 2000-election?**

The growing social and economical disparity in Lithuania became a central political issue in the 2000-election campaign (Adomenas 2005: 62). Table 9 presents the 2000-election results for parties obtaining mandates in the PR-election.

Table 9: Election result 2000

<b>Party</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Social Democratic Coalition (SDK)	31,1
New Union-Social liberals (NS-S)	19,6
Lithuanian Liberal Union (LLS)	17,3
Homeland Union (TS)	8,6

Source: Holm-Hansen 2002: 89

The incumbent centre-right coalition of TS, LKDP and LCS suffered major losses, only TS managed to get re-elected in the PR-election with eight percent of the votes. The Social Democratic Coalition (SDK), a united coalition of the leftist parties, became this election's winner with just above thirty percent of the votes. The party performed well especially in the Panevezio and Utenos regions, rural constituencies in the north-eastern territories, with over forty percent of the votes in the PR-election. It also grew in urban constituencies compared to the 1996-elections. In addition, two new parties successfully emerged, Lithuanian Liberal Union (LLS) and New Union-Social Liberals (NS-S), together receiving close to forty percent of the votes.

### **6.2.1 Correlation results**

The polarisation of Lithuanian politics in the 2000-election is also evident in the correlation analysis presented below in Table 10. While the correlation between Urbanism and Agrar and parties only were significant for LCS and LDDP in the 1996-election, all parties receiving mandates in the PR-election were significant in the 2000-election. Table 10 presents the

correlation results between the variables measuring the urban-rural cleavage and support for parties from the 2000-election.

Table 10: Correlation results 2000-election

	<b>Urbanism</b>	<b>Agrar</b>	<b>LLS</b>	<b>TS</b>	<b>NS</b>	<b>SDK</b>
<i>Urbanism</i>	1	-,964**	,847**	,351**	-,328*	-,339**
<i>Agrar</i>	-,914**	1	-,812**	-,308*	,319*	,341**

\*\* Correlation significant at 0.01 level, 2-tailed.

\* Correlation significant at 0.05 level, 2-tailed

N=59

As with the incumbent LDDP in the 1996-election, the electoral defeat of incumbent TS in the 2000-election had an urban-rural dimension, although with opposite direction. The party was abandoned in most rural constituencies, going from an average of 25 percent in the 1996-election to well below ten on a rural average in 2000. The correlation results in Table 10 indicate that the remaining support for TS was mainly urban. TS correlate significant and positive with Urbanism and significant and negative with Agrar. The same pattern, but much stronger, is also evident for the newcomer Lithuanian Liberal Union (LLS). The correlation analysis supports the view of LLS being most popular among middle class and entrepreneurs in the larger cities (Adomenas 2005: 56). The two other parties obtaining mandates in the PR-election, Social Democratic Coalition (SDK) and New Union-Social Liberals (NS-S) have a convergent pattern regarding their correlation with Urbanism and Agrar. Both correlate negatively with Urbanism, SDK significant at 0.01 level NS-S significance at 0.05 level, and both correlate positively with Agrar, SDK significant at 0.01 level and NS-S significant at 0.05 level.

The main urban party from the last election, LCS, failed to get represented and the urban voters seemed to be shared by TS and LLS four years later. The rural constituencies, mainly being dominated by LDDP in 1996, seem to be dominated by two parties, SDK and NS-S, four years later. One can argue that in rural constituencies, LDDP's (later SDK) grip of the rural electorate in the 1996-election was faced with competition from NS-S in the 2000-election. LCS grip of the urban constituencies in the 1996-election, was challenged by LLS and TS.

### ***Inter-party correlation***

Table 11 presents the correlation results from the intra-party correlation from parties obtaining mandates in the PR-election in the 2000-election.

Table 11: Inter-party correlation 2000-election

	<b>LLS</b>	<b>TS</b>	<b>NS</b>	<b>SDK</b>
<i>LLS</i>	1	,421**	-,368**	-,534**
<i>TS</i>	,421**	1	-,492**	-,480**
<i>NS</i>	-,368**	-,492**	1	-,010
<i>SDK</i>	-,534**	-,480**	-,010	1

\*\* Correlation significant at 0.01 level, 2-tailed. N=59

\* Correlation significant at 0.05 level, 2-tailed.

LLS' positive significant correlation with TS, and negative significant correlation with SDK and NS-S, strengthens the assumptions of an urban-rural cleavage between these two groups of parties. Both TS and LLS performed better in larger cities than in rural constituencies, while NS-S and SDK had the opposite result. The correlation result between LLS and SDK is somewhat stronger than for the other parties. The insignificant correlation result for NS-S and SDK is interesting. Although Table 10 indicated that both parties can be regarded as mainly rural, Table 11 reveals no significant pattern in the correlation between the support for these two parties. Out of this one might suggest that since SDK performed very well in almost all rural constituencies, NS-S' support was probably more concentrated.

The correlation results in Table 10 and Table 11 suggest that the urban-rural cleavage in the 2000-election was represented by LLS and TS, being urban, and SDK and NS-S represented the rural side.

### **6.3 Urban-rural cleavage in the 2004-election?**

The Lithuanian party system disintegrated further with the 2004 election. The party system stability of the 1990s seemed to belong to the past. The newcomer Labour Party (DP) won the election being the largest party in almost every constituency, close to thirty percent of the votes nation wide. The other newcomer, Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) received just above ten percent of the votes. It performed well especially in the north-western regions such as Telsiu and Klaipedos County. Although all the four established party alternatives managed to get re-elected, they were heavily affected by the outcome of this election. Table 12 presents the election result for parties obtaining mandates in the PR-election.



Table 12: Election result 2004

Party	Percent
Labour party (DP)	28,6
Working for Lithuania (LSDP-NS)	20,7
Homeland Union (TS)	14,6
Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)	11,4
Liberal and Centre Union (LiCS)	9,2
Peasants' and New Democracy Union (VNDS)	6,6

Source: [www.parties-and-elections.de](http://www.parties-and-elections.de)

The incumbent coalition of LSDP and NS-S ran under a common party label in the PR-election and suffered major losses in this election, especially in rural constituencies compared to the 2000-election. LSDP-NS went from a collective support of fifty percent in the 2000-election, to just above twenty percent in the 2004-election. TS ended up with around 15 percent of the votes. The party's main support was in urban constituencies in and around the larger cities, such as Kaunas and Vilnius, strongholds from the last two elections. Liberal and Centre Union (LiCS) received just below ten percent of the votes. The party achieved best results in the larger urban constituencies. Peasant's and New Democracy Union (VNDS) obtained for the first time mandates in PR-election with close to seven percent support nation wide. This party performed best results in rural constituencies.

### 6.3.1 Correlation results

Table 13 presents the correlation results between the variables measuring the urban-rural cleavage and the parties from the 2004-election.

Table 13: Correlation results 2004-election

	Urbanism	Agrar	DP	VNDS	LSDP-NS	TS	LDP	LiCS
<i>Urbanism</i>	1	-,410**	-,163	-,151	-,040	,243*	,013	,505**
<i>Agrar</i>	-,410**	1	,322**	,381**	-,158	-,162	-,166	-,467**

\*\* Correlation significant at 0.01 level, 2-tailed.

\* Correlation significant at 0.05 level, 2-tailed.

N=106

Urbanism is positive and significant at 0.05 level for TS, and 0.01 for LiCS. This leads to the assumption of these parties being mainly supported by urban voters in larger cities. No parties can be said to represent the rural side on the variable Urbanism in the 2004-election. Regarding the second variable measuring the urban-rural dimension Agrar, the result is positive and significant at 0,01 level for DP and VNDS, and negative and significant at 0.01 level for LiCS. Especially the correlation coefficients for the percentage of agricultural workers have strong results for VNDS and LICS, although with opposite signs. Increasing support VNDS correlates with rising percentage of agricultural workers, while increasing support for LiCS correlates with decreasing percentage of agricultural workers.

The insignificant correlation result for LSDP-NS in the 2004-election is interesting because it indicates that the urban-rural dimension did not affect the support for the party. As shown from the analysis above, both NS-S, in the 2000-election, and LDDP/SDK, in the 1996 and 2000-election, had significant correlation results as rural parties in these elections. The correlation results from the 2004-election rather suggest that rural agricultural constituencies to a larger degree correlate positively with support for DP and VNDS.

### *Inter-party correlation*

Table 14: Inter-party correlation 2004-election

	<b>DP</b>	<b>VNDS</b>	<b>LSDP-NS</b>	<b>TS</b>	<b>LDP</b>	<b>LiCS</b>
<i>DP</i>	1	,207*	-,288**	-,280**	-,180	-,253**
<i>VNDS</i>	,207*	1	-,336**	-,216*	,016	-,294**
<i>LSDP-NS</i>	-,288**	-,336**	1	,309**	-,268**	,169
<i>TS</i>	-,280**	-,216*	,309**	1	-,290**	,366**
<i>LDP</i>	-,180	,016	-,268**	-,290**	1	-,152
<i>LiCS</i>	-,253**	-,294**	,169	,366**	-,152	1

\*\* Correlation significant at 0.01 level, 2-tailed.

\* Correlation significant at 0.05 level, 2-tailed.

N=106

Table 14 confirms in many ways the abovementioned patterns. First of all, DP and VNDS correlate positively and significant with each other at 0.05 level. All the other parties, except LDP, correlate significant negative with the increasing support for DP. Another interesting finding is the strong negative significant correlation between VNDS and LSDP-NS. Since the support for VNDS correlated positively with agricultural employment and was significant at 0.01 level, while LSDP-NS did not correlate significantly with none of these variables, one can derive the argument the significant negative correlation between LSDP-NS and VNDS can indicate that these two parties competed for the same rural constituencies. In rural constituencies with increasing support for VNDS, LSDP-NS decreased their support and visa versa. VNDS did not attract urban voters to the same degree as LSDP-NS did and can thereby be said to be more rural in its outlooks. The growth of VNDS in rural agricultural constituencies can be a result of the decreasing support for LSDP-NS compared with the 2000-election.

LSDP-NS' positive significant correlation with TS, and insignificant correlation with LiCS support the argument that the urban-rural dimension did not affect the LSDP-NS result. Regarding the urban parties from Table 13, TS and LiCS, they correlate positively and significant at a 0.01 level. Both of them correlate significant and negatively with DP and

VNDS. The negative correlation between LiCS and VNDS is especially interesting because both these parties had the strongest, significant and opposite results correlated with Agrar in Table 13.

### 6.3.2 Regression results

The quality of the 2004-data opens for a broader study of this election. A regression analysis from the 2004-election is presented below in Table 15. The advantage with such an analysis is to study the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, and thereby assumptions regarding causal relationships. The regression analysis applies, in addition Significance level, standardised Beta coefficients to study the relationship the variables. The standardised Beta coefficient indicates changes in the depended variable when the independent variable increases with one unit, when all other variables are held constant (Grønmo 2004).

Table 15: Regression results 2004-election

<i>Party</i>	Standardised Beta coefficients	
	<b>Urbanism</b>	<b>Agrar</b>
<i>DP</i>	-,090	,297**
<i>LDP</i>	-,118	-,199*
<i>LiCS</i>	,409**	-,354**
<i>LSDP-NS</i>	-,135	-,195
<i>TS</i>	,234*	-,097
<i>VNDS</i>	-,031	,373**

\*\* Correlation significant at 0.01 level  
\* Correlation significant at 0.05 level

N=106

The results from the regression analysis in Table 15, confirm the same patterns as the correlation analysis suggested. Some parties seem to perform better in rural and agricultural constituencies than in urban ones, and visa versa. Beta coefficients are only significant for Urbanism and the support for LiCS, significant at 0.01 level, and TS, significant at 0.05 level. Both Beta coefficients are positive indicating that LiCS and TS increase their support with respectively 0,409 percentage and 0,234 percentage if the population in cities increases with 1000 inhabitants. This confirms the assumptions of these parties being dominate in larger cities.

Agricultural employment is significant at 0.01 level for DP, LiCS and VNDS, while significant at 0.05 level for LDP. The positive standardised Beta coefficient for DP implies a 0,297 percentage increase in support for the party when agricultural employment increases with one percent. The relationship is stronger regarding VNDS and LiCS. A one percentage increase in agricultural employment increases the support for VNDS with 0,373 percentage. The support for LiCS drop by 0, 354 percentage when the agricultural employment increases

with one percentage. LDP also drop when agricultural employment increases, although the result is less significant.

The regression analysis confirms the insignificant result for the variables measuring the urban-rural cleavage and LSDP-NS, suggested in the correlation analysis. The support for do not have significant Beta coefficients with Urbanism and Agrar in Table 15.

### *Inter-party regression*

Table 16 shows the Beta coefficients from the regression analysis between the parties. We can thereby see how each party's support is related to the support for the other parties. Special attention is devoted to the parties with significant Beta coefficients in the regression analysis in Table 15, since these parties' support was related to variables measuring the urban-rural cleavage. The Beta coefficients indicate changes for the dependent variables when the independent variables increase with one unit. The regression results from the 2004-election were presented in Table 15, and all parties except LSDP-NS, had significant Beta coefficients with either Urbanism or Agrar, or both. LiCS, LDP and TS were urban, while DP and VNDS were mainly rural.

Table 16: Inter-party regression 2004-election

<i>Dependent variables</i>	<b>Independent variables</b>					
	<b>DP</b>	<b>VNDS</b>	<b>LSDP-NS</b>	<b>TS</b>	<b>LDP</b>	<b>LiCS</b>
<i>DP</i>	-	,022	-,274**	-,230*	-,346**	-,168
<i>VNDS</i>	,024	-	-,301**	-,065	-,114	-,231*
<i>LSDP-NS</i>	-,268**	-,270**	-	,116	-,289**	-,064
<i>TS</i>	-,224*	-,058	,115	-	-,263**	,233*
<i>LDP</i>	-,352**	-,107	-,300**	-,274**	-	-,121
<i>LiCS</i>	-,178	-,224*	-,069	,253*	-,125	-

\*\* Correlation significant at 0.01 level

\* Correlation significant at 0.05 level

N=106

The results from the intra-party regression strengthen the findings from the correlation analysis. First of all, the support for DP is related to a significant decreasing percentage support for LSDP-NS (-0, 268), TS (-0, 224) and LDP (-0, 352), but not for LiCS. LiCS was definitively the strongest urban party on both variables in the regression in Table 15. The insignificant regression between DP and LiCS weakens the position of DP as a main rural party. A one percent increase in the support for VNDS involves a significant decreasing percentage support for LSDP-NS (-0,270) and LiCS (-0,224). The interesting here is that VNDS was the main rural party in the regression in Table 15 and the insignificant Beta coefficients with DP, TS and LDP can indicate that these three parties did not represent the urban-rural cleavage in the 2004-election. The negatively significant Beta coefficient between

LSDP-NS and VNDS can support the argument made earlier that these two parties competed for the same rural electorate. Since LSDP-NS was both urban and rural, while VNDS was rural, one can suggest that in rural constituencies where VNDS increased their support by one percent, LSDP-NS reduced their support by 0,270 percentage. The growth of VNDS in agricultural constituencies can be seen as a result of the decreasing rural support for LSDP-NS, compared to the 2000-election. The significant positive Beta coefficient between LiCS and TS (0,233) can indicate that the support for these two parties are related, but that LiCS' support is more limited to the larger cities.

Combining the results from the two regression analyses for the 2004-election, we can conclude with LiCS and VNDS representing the urban-rural cleavage, while DP and TS, which were included as rural and urban parties in the correlation analyses, are left out. LiCS and VNDS are the only parties with significant Beta coefficients on the variables measuring the urban-rural dimension, and at the same time have significant negative Beta coefficients in the intra-party regression with each other.

#### **6.4 *Post-communist urban-rural representation in Lithuania***

One should notice that the values of the correlation coefficients of the analyses presented above vary. Although satisfying a Significance level of either 0.01 or 0.05, the correlation level of especially the 2004-election is weaker than the former two. This can be a result of the different number of units and by the different categorisation of urbanism in this dataset. The weak results can also be explained by outliers in the datasets. For instance the rural party Peasants' and New Democracy Union (VNDS) got 28,1 percent of the votes in the city of Visaginas in 2004<sup>28</sup>. If this unit is left out the analysis, the correlation between Urbanism and VNDS is negative and significant at 0.05 level in the 2004-dataset. Another element is the design of the analysis. Both the correlation and the regression analyses prerequisite a linear relationship between the variables, but the relationship can for instance be curve linear. Party support can be related to a certain size of the cities. The different levels of party support are not accounted for in this analysis. A party receiving six percent and a party receiving forty percent are treated equally. Finally, there are of course some limitations with the aggregated datasets applied in this thesis. A further study could for instance include party programs, time series data, data on individual level and so on.

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<sup>28</sup> The closing of the Ignalina power plant in Visaginas and VNDS's opposition towards this can explain the party's success in this area ([www.vnds.lt](http://www.vnds.lt), [www.delfi.lt](http://www.delfi.lt) 20.03.2006)

Concentrating on the results found in the analyses above, one can state that the voters' party preferences alter on the urban-rural cleavage in Lithuania. In the 1996-election LDDP and LCS represented the opposite sides of the urban-rural cleavage. Four years later the urban-rural cleavage can be said to have been represented by four parties; SDK and NS-S were most attractive in rural agricultural constituencies, while TS and LLS were successful in the urban constituencies. In the 2004-election, LiCS was the urban party. SDK and NS-S were abandoned in rural constituencies in favour of a new party, VNDS.

Table 17 presents a correlation of all urban-rural parties from the 1996, 2000 and 2004 elections. The support for each party is correlated with the support of the others, but now across elections. This can be a way of tracing the urban-rural cleavage in different parties through the three elections studied in this thesis.

Table 17: Correlation of urban and rural parties

		"Rural parties"				"Urban parties"			
		1996	2000	2004		1996	2000	2004	
		LDDP	SDK	NS-S	VNDS	LCS	LLS	TS	LiCS
"Rural"	LDDP	1							
	SDK	,702**	1						
	NS-S	,300*	-,010	1					
	VNDS	,542**	,555**	,070	1				
"Urban"	LCS	-,282*	-,018	-,094	-,250	1			
	LLS	-,542**	-,534**	-,368**	-,541**	,407**	1		
	TS	-,318*	-,480**	-,492**	-,464**	-,064	,421**	1	
	LiCS	-,449**	-,592**	-,297*	-,571**	,264*	,907**	,513**	1

\*\* Correlation significant at 0.01 level

\* Correlation significant at 0.05 level

N=59

Most important for the argument raised in this thesis, are the rural parties' positive correlation with other rural parties and their negative correlation with the urban parties, and visa versa. The upper left and the lower right sections of Table 17 confirm a pattern of continuous party type support with shifting parties. Rural parties correlate positively with the other rural parties (upper left), and negatively with the urban parties (lower right). The correlation between urban and rural parties is negative (upper right), while the correlation between the urban parties is positive (lower right). Some results are weaker than others, such as NS-S, in the rural group, and LCS, in the urban group. Some results are particularly strong, such as the correlation between LLS and LiCS with a Pearson's  $r$  of 0,907 and significant at 0.01 level. Also the correlation between LDDP and SDK is strong, positive with a Pearson's  $r$  of 0,702.

The Reversed cleavage model suggests that shifting parties are related to the parties' inability to survive as organisations, and not to a fluid cleavage structure. Since parties are weakly aligned to the electorate and lack historical baggage, they are incapable of owning political

issues. The lack of historical baggage makes it difficult for parties to define new societal conflicts into their party substance, because the spatial framework is absent. The shifting representation of the urban-rural cleavage in Lithuania can be explained by the constant incentives for new parties to emerge because the old parties lack the ability to own the rural issue and further to generate new cleavages into their party substance. Although the correlation coefficients vary both in strength and significance level, the results in Table 17 confirm the assumption of the Reversed cleavage model. Shifting parties can represent a constant cleavage pattern.

#### **6.4.1 Many cleavage representatives**

The analysis results, suggesting a pattern of shifting parties representing the urban-rural cleavage, show that incumbent parties do not only lose elections, their position as representatives of the urban-rural cleavage is continuously challenged by new parties. The increasing fragmentation of the Lithuanian party system can be explained by the electorate's dissatisfaction with the established parties in general, and incumbent parties in particular. Lithuanian Centre Union (LCS) and Lithuanian Democratic Labour Party (LDDP) were the only parties representing the urban-rural cleavage in the 1996-election. In the 2000 and 2004 elections each side of the urban-rural cleavage was represented by other parties. One might state that the rise of New Union-Social liberals (NS-S) in rural constituencies in the 2000-election reflected a distrust to the former dominate rural party LDDP, and the success of Peasants' and New Democracy Union (VNDS) in 2004 reflected the rural electorate's disappointment with the incumbent NS-S and SDK. Same pattern is also found in parties representing the urban side, reflecting a shifting organisational expression of the urban-rural cleavage. LCS was the only urban party in the 1996-election. Four years later after being in government, it did not even manage to get re-elected; Lithuanian Liberal Union (LLS) and Homeland Union (TS) were considered as the urban parties in the 2000-election. In the 2004-election Liberal and centre Union (LiCS) represented the urban interests. During the last two parliamentary elections in Lithuania, the support for these urban parties has been more concentrated around the larger cities such as Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipeda and Panevezys.





## Chapter 7

# Conclusion

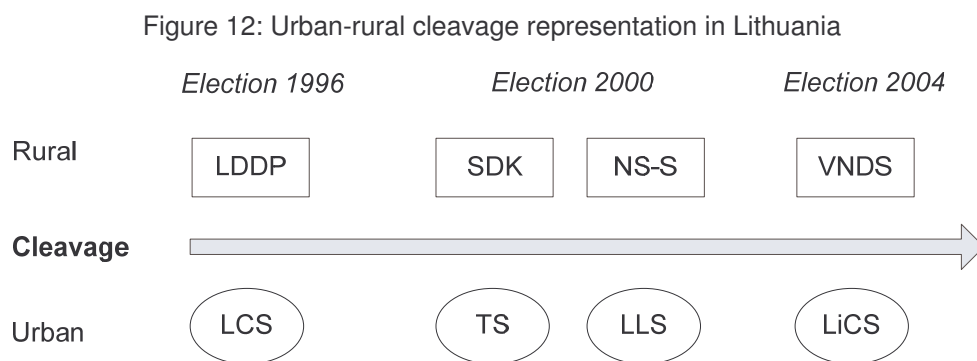
This thesis introduced the Reversed cleavage model to study party system formation along the urban-rural cleavage in post-communist Lithuania. The Reversed cleavage model built upon Lipset and Rokkan's framework, but incorporates contextual features from the Modernisation approach and the Missing middle approach to fit the post-communist setting. Although the model so far has only been applied on Lithuania, the framework should fit the study of unstable party systems and cleavages in most post-communist settings. The fact that voters change parties frequently, as they do in Lithuania and Central and Eastern Europe in general, does not necessary mean that the foundation for cleavages are absent.

The Reversed cleavage model operates with the opposite assumptions of what Lipset and Rokkan did. The first assumption is that parties are shifting. Because of weak institutionalisation and disconnected organisational alignments between voters and parties, due to the communist heritage, the parties themselves become fragile, elite controlled and incapable of implementing efficient policies anchored in the electorates' interests. This weakens the parties' ability to own political issues and to freeze alignments with the electorate and further their ability to survive. The lack of historical baggage makes it difficult for parties to define new societal conflicts into their party substance, because the spatial framework is absent. The founding potential for new parties is therefore always present.

The second assumption of the Reversed cleavage model is that cleavages are constant. Societal conflicts could not be organised into political alternatives during communism in Lithuania, and CEE in general. This weakened the parties' ability to solve or define societal conflicts. Following the first assumption about parties being shifting and with weakened ability to solve political issues they claim to represent, cleavages are not solved or defined by the parties. Therefore these cleavages sustain. The identification of cleavages thereby relates less to parties because they are unstable, but more to socio-structural characteristics among the electorate and their preference of parties.

The Reversed cleavage model demonstrates how cleavages can reflect the party-voter alignments in a context where party institutionalisation is weak. The assumptions of parties being shifting and cleavages being constant, illustrate the favourable conditions for the emergence for new parties and the unfavourable conditions affecting parties' ability to survive. The emergence of new parties is advantageous because the existing parties' weak alignments with the electorate. At the same time, these circumstances are unfavourable for the survival of any party, exactly because the alignments with the electorate are temporally and weak. Parties therefore emerge under favourable conditions, but the conditions affecting their survival are more unfavourable. Weak party-voter alignments and the electorate's disappointment with the old parties in general, but the incumbent parties in particular, result in a constant incentive for new parties to emerge as cleavage representatives.

By applying the theoretical framework of the Reversed cleavage model, the target of the analysis in this thesis was the urban-rural cleavage in post-communist Lithuania. The results of the analyses show that the voters' party preferences alter on the very same dimension, and that different parties represent the same cleavage from election to election. The analysis results from the last three Seimas elections suggest that party support along the urban-rural cleavage in Lithuania can be viewed according to Figure 12.



As Figure 12 shows, in each of the three elections different parties seem to represent the urban-rural cleavage in the Lithuanian party system. Lithuanian Democratic Labour Party (LDDP) and Lithuanian Centre Union (LCS) represented the opposite poles of the urban-rural cleavage in the 1996-election. In 2000 the urban-rural cleavage was represented by four parties; Social Democratic Coalition (SDK) and New Union-Social liberals (NS-S) were most attractive in rural, agricultural constituencies, while Homeland Union (TS) and Lithuanian Liberal Union (LLS) were successful in the urban constituencies. In the 2004-election SDK and NS-S were abandoned in rural constituencies in favour of Peasants and New Democracy

Union (VNDS). The urban constituencies were dominated by Liberal and Centre Union (LiCS).

The shifting party representation of the urban-rural cleavage in Lithuania confirms the assumptions of the Reversed cleavage model: New parties can emerge along this dimension because (1) the old parties lack the ability to own the urban-rural issue by establishing long-lasting alignments with the electorate, and (2) old parties have problems generating new cleavages into their party substance since their party substance itself is blur. Thereby, the unstable party system is not a result of voters' missing perception of cleavages, but rather related to parties' inability to represent these cleavages by establishing long-lasting alignments with the electorate. The results of this analysis show that the urban-rural cleavage has the ability to structure voter's party preferences in Lithuania, but the organisational expression is fluid since parties are incapable of representing the cleavage over time. Therefore, a stable cleavage structure can persist alongside an unstable party system.



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# Statistical data

## Agriculture and population data

The Department of Statistics to the Government of the Republic of Lithuania

[www.stat.gov.lt/lt/](http://www.stat.gov.lt/lt/) (20.3.2006)

- *Provisional results for the census of agriculture 2003 in the Republic of Lithuania.*
- *Census of Agriculture 2005 in the Republic of Lithuania.*
- *Population census 2005.*

## Election data

- The Lithuanian National Electoral Committee (e-mail: [ZeVaig@lrs.lt](mailto:ZeVaig@lrs.lt)) [www.seimas.lt](http://www.seimas.lt) (20.02.2006)
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Election and parties: [www.parties-and-elections.de](http://www.parties-and-elections.de) (20.2.2006)

## Homepage of the parties:

DP	Labour Party	<a href="http://www.darbopartija.lt">www.darbopartija.lt</a>
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party	<a href="http://www.ldp.lt">www.ldp.lt</a>
LiCS	Liberal and Centre Union	<a href="http://www.lics.lt">www.lics.lt</a>
LSDP	Lithuanian Social Democratic Party	<a href="http://www.lsdpl.lt">www.lsdpl.lt</a>
NS-S	New Union-Social Liberals	<a href="http://www.nsajunga.lt">www.nsajunga.lt</a>
TS	Homeland Union- Conservatives, Political Prisoners and Deportees and Christian Democrats	<a href="http://www.tsajunga.lt">www.tsajunga.lt</a>
VNDS	Peasants' and New Democracy Union	<a href="http://www.vnds.lt">www.vnds.lt</a>

# Appendix

## *Employment in agriculture:*

“All persons who have been doing farm work for the last 12 months shall be indicated. Data on each person was written only once. If the person has several functions in the farm, e.g. is both a spouse of the farm holder and a farm manager, data shall not be written twice. Observation period can also be shorter than 12 months if information for 12 months is provided. Farm work is any work related to production of agricultural products and maintenance of their characteristics.”

(Source: Agricultural census 2005)

## *Urbanism:*

“According to the Law on territorial administrative division of the Republic of Lithuania (passed 19 July 1994) urban population are persons who reside in cities and towns, i.e. in densely constructed residential territories with over 3 thousand inhabitants, of which over two-thirds work in industry, business, productive and social infrastructure areas. Territories with less than 3 thousand inhabitants are also attributed to towns if such towns were granted the status before the law entered into force. Rural population are persons who reside in residential areas with no city attributes (settlements, villages and farm-steads).”

(Source: Statistical Department of the Lithuanian Republic)

## *Units of analysis:*

Since data on agriculture employment is on district level and election data on constituency level in the 1996 and 2000 datasets, these constituencies are combined into new analysis units:

Constituency number	Name
47 and 28	Pasvalio - Panevezio and Aukštaitijos
32 and 33	Silutes - Pagegiu and Silales - Silutes
39 and 46	Akmenes - Joniskio and Pakruojo - Joniskio
65,66 and 43	Kauno - Kedainiu, Kauno kaimiskoji and Kedainiu
48 and 49	Birzu Kupiskio and Anyksciu - Kupiskio
53 and 54	Ignalinos - Svencioniu and Moletu - Svencioniu
55, 56, 57, 58,59 and 70	Sirvintu - Vilniaus, Vilniaus - Salcininku, Vilniaus - Traku, Traku - Elektrenu, Kaisiadoriu - Elektrenu and Varenos - Eisiskiu